

DELIGHT  
AND  
JUDGMENT:

Or, a Prospect of the

Great Day  
OF  
Judgment,

And its Power to damp, and  
imbitter Sensual Delights, Sports,  
and Recreations.

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By ANTHONY HORNECK, D.D.

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LONDON,

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*Bedford House in the Strand*, 1684.

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## The FREELANCE



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MANU BHARATI  
GANGA DIPAKA

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# The Preface

## The PREFACE.

**T**Hough Practical Writers have this advantage of Controversial, that they do not make themselves so many Enemies, as the other, yet I know not, what the fate of the ensuing Discourse may be : For though the subject relate to Manners, and the Behaviour of Men, as Christians ; yet it is to be feared, that not a few who think themselves Religious, & notwithstanding their pretended Piety, securely bathe themselves in Delights, this Book condemns, may put no very favourable construction on such endeavours, as being levell'd against things, they are used to, and the Humour of the Age hath allowed of, and rendred unquestionable ; and such it's like will call these at-

tempts, pragmatical, and bid us; as  
Constantine did Acesius in  
Socrat. Eccl. Hist. l. i. c. 2. another case, erect a Ladder  
to Heaven, and climb up  
thither by our selves.

But it's God's Mercy, that while  
Christianity is decay'd in the Glory and  
Brightness of its Life, the Bible is still  
among us, and that we are not to regu-  
late our Religion by the sickly Fancies  
of half Christians, but by the standing  
Laws of that Jesus, whose Disciples  
we profess our selves to be, and whom  
the Primitive Believers thought them-  
selves obliged to follow in external, as  
well as internal simplicity.

It's true, the Church is not now un-  
der Persecution, as it was in former  
Days, when Men made those mighty  
Progresses in Self-denial, but it is to  
be observed that when the Saints of  
the first Ages pressed those Severities,  
they did not lay the Stress on their per-  
secuted Condition, and the necessity of  
the dismal Times they lived in, but on  
the Laws of their great Master, which  
they

## The Preface.

they look'd upon to be as immutable, as the God that gave them : Nor can prosperity make any alteration in those Lessons, which Christ required as Essential to his Religion ; Prosperity indeed was intended to prompt us to a more cheerful discharge of our Duty, but not to a neglect of those Austerities, which are the best Ornaments of the best Religion in the World.

As Men have managed Prosperity, it hath been the greatest Bane of Religion, and the wisest Men have taken notice, how Christianity since it hath crept out of the Thorns and Bryars of Barbarous Tyranny and Oppression, hath been unhappily decreasing in its Zeal, and Fervour ; whether it is Fable, or History that tells us, that a Voice came from Heaven, saying, This Day Poyson is poured out into the Church, when Ease and Plenty, and Rivers of Gold flowed into it, I shall not now enquire ; Certain it is, that external Felicity hath smilingly undermin'd the Foundations of that admirable Do-

## The Preface.

Erine, and that which was formerly built on the greatest Innocence, hath since changed its bottom, and stands too much on Show, and formality.

Prosperity at this Day, to the great Sorrow of all considerate Persons, gives Law to Mens Religion, and whatever crosses Prosperity, is thought to cross Religion too. What is consistent with our ease, is allow'd of as good Divinity, and whatever runs counter to our sensual Satisfaction, appears so awkward, that we fancy it no Religion, because Flesh and Blood would not have it so; all which must necessarily arise from Unbelief, or a wavering Faith of a Life to come; either that future Life, the Son of God hath purchased, and promised, is not look'd upon to be so great, as it is represented in the Gospel, or it is not seriously thought of; for if it were, the Pleasures of this Life would grow pale, and their Beauty vanish, if compared with the glorious delights hereafter, and the Satisfaction of this World would soon lose

## The Preface.

lose their Charms, if view'd by that Light, which irradiates the Holy Cherubim: If that Life deserves not Self-denial in the Pleasures of this present, Christ and his Apostles must needs have been out in the lofty Descriptions, they have given of it, and our Faith is vain, and in vain did the Son of God take all those pains, and suffer all the Agonies, he did, to purchase a thing so trivial, and inconsiderable.

If it were a thing of no great moment, the but moderately Pious, would not be excluded from its Glories, and when nothing but Heroick Virtue can promise it self a share in that Felicity, it cannot be otherwise, but that the Prize doth answer the difficulties in the pursuit of its attainment. They are Great and Masculine Acts, that Christianity prompts us to; and wherein can this Heroick Virtue be expressed better then in a Noble contempt of what foolish Mortals count pleasant and tickling to their Flesh, and Fancy?

## The Preface.

cy? Such acts are arguments of a brave and generous Mind, and signs that our understandings soar above the Moon, and rely more on what God hath promised, than on what the World for the present pays. This shews that our Souls do act like themselves, and not to be biassed by vulgar Sentiments, is that which gives a Man Reputation with the Best of Beings.

Christ in pressing these Lessons, hath only made a clearer Revelation of what the Philosophers of Old guessed at by the glimmering light, which Nature gave them, and what can be more for a Man's Credit, than to do that, which both Nature and Grace have judged to be most honourable and glorious.

There is no Question, but if that, Eternal Life hereafter, were shewn in all its Glories, and Riches, and Consents to a sensual Man at the same time, that he beholds the most charming delights of the Flesh, and had he as lively a view of the one, as he hath of the other, the infinite brightness of the one would

## The Preface.

would so eclipse, and darken the feebler splendour of the other, that he would not only be content to quit his inferior delights for the enjoyment of the other, but would very much wonder at that Monster, that should refuse the greater for the lesser pleasures; so that all the difficulty is, how to make that Eternal Life so visible, that it shall move, and affect, and preponderate above all Earthly satisfactions. And the way to do this, is the same with the Method, that must be taken in making the Day of Judgment visible to us, which is the attempt of the following Discourse, in which I hope I have said nothing but what is agreeable to the Doctrine of the Primitive Church. If any shall find fault with some passages in it, because they contradict the Vanity and Luxury of the Age we live in, or charge me with meddling with things, which do not belong to me to determine, all I shall reply, is this, that I have done no more, but what I have excellent Precedents for,

## The Preface.

for, even some of the best Divines of our Church since the Reformation, whose Example as I am not ashamed to follow, so since they thought it their duty to discourage such Vulgar Errours, it cannot be a Crime in us to follow their Faith, knowing the end of their Conversation.



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THE  
**S U M M A R Y**  
Of the whole  
DISCOURSE.

**T**He Explication of the Text,  
Pag. 1--6.

The Proposition ; *That the Prospect of a future Judgment is enough to imbitter all the Sensual, and Carnal delights of Men, particularly of young Men, and to bring a damp upon the most Youthful, and most Jovial Temper imaginable,* p. 6, 7.

The illustration of this Proposition, p. 7—12

The Heads of the Discourse :

1. *What Reason we have to believe, that there is a Day of Judgment. The Reasons drawn :*

1. From the Universal consent of

*The Summary*

of the wiser sort of Mankind.

2. From the Being, and Justice of  
God.

III. What there is in that future  
Judgment, that's able to cast a damp  
on the Mirrour, and Jollities of Men,  
especially the younger sort.

1. In the Prospect of this Judg-  
ment there appears a very serious  
Judge, the mighty Jesus, the Son of  
God,

2. A very strict Examination  
of what we have done in the  
Flesh,

3. A very wonderful Scene;  
The Person that is the Judge is  
the Law-giver too, the Party of-  
fended, the Witness, and his own  
Advocate,

4. The unspeakable anguish, and  
misery of those, who have been  
most jolly and merry in this  
life.

III. How the Prospect of that  
future Judgment must be managed,  
that it may actually damp, and put

of the whole Discourse.

a stop to these Carnal delights ?

1. By thinking, reflecting, and ruminating, upon that future Judgment, p. 83.

2. By applying the particulars of this future Judgment to our selves, p. 94.

3. By seconding all this with earnest Prayer, p. 103.

IV. Whether every Man is bound to imbitter his Carnal delights with this Prospect ? Aff.

1. Because if not imbitter'd they will infallibly lead the Soul into innumerable dangers, p. 112.

2. Because to imbitter such delights to our selves is a thing of the greatest concernment, p. 116.

3. This imbittering our sensual delights with such a Prospect is that, which men will certainly wish they had done, when they appear at the Great Tribunal, p. 120.

V. Whether a Christian, that would be saved, is upon this account obliged to forbear, and abandon all

Sensual

## The Summary.

- Sensual and Worldly delights, and recreations whatsoever? concerning
- The Answer to this Querry laid down in several Articles:
1. Spiritual delight is and must be the chief delight of a Christian, p. 127.
  2. Worldly delights, as are neither sinful in themselves, nor apparent occasions of evil, are allowable, p. 129.
  3. Delight in Gardens, Rivers, Orchards, &c. considered, p. 131.
  4. Of delight in Musick either Vocal, or Instrumental, p. 133.
  5. Of delight in Books, p. 135.
  6. Of delight in Drinking and Tippling, p. 138.
  7. Of delight in Cards, & Dice, p. 141.
  8. Of delight in Feasting, and going to Feasts, MORTDALE p. 147.
  9. Of delight in fashionable Cloaths and Habits, as well as p. 154.
  10. Of delight in Painting and Patterning, and artificial Meliorations of the Face and Skin, p. 176.
  11. Of delight in Dancing, p. 192.
  12. Of delight in Seeing and going to Stage-  
THEATRE.

of the whole Discourse.

Stage-plays, p. 205.

Inferences drawn from the Premises.

1. How far sorrow is better than laughter, explained, p. 127.
2. How differently Spiritual things affect men, as they either attentively, or inattentively think upon them, p. 290.
3. How much the greatest part of the World is to be pitied, that can delight in nothing, but what they can grasp and feel, p. 300.
4. How unreasonable it is to harbour any hard Thoughts of Religion, because it debars us of dangerous, sensual delights, p. 313.
5. How necessary it is to prepare for the Great Day of Account.

DIRECTIONS.

1. To pity those inconsiderate Men that live, as if there were no future Judgment, p. 329.
2. To spend some time every Day in reflecting upon this Day, p. 330.
3. To walk circumspectly every Day, and to use that conscientiousness we would use, were we sure, we should be summon'd to Judgment at Night,

p. 337.

4. To

*The Summary, &c.*

4. To reflect and think on this Day, when ever we see, or hear of the judicial Proceedings of a Malefactor. p. 339.
5. To reflect on this Day, whenever we converse with sick, and dying men, or are present, when their Breath leaves their Bodies, p. 343.
6. To consider on this Day, whenever we go to a Funeral. p. 346.
7. To judge our selves here on Earth, in order to avoid the terror of God's future Judgment, p. 351.
8. In our actions to regard not so much how they are received with Men, as whether they will endure the Test before the Judge, when our Souls shall appear before him, p. 354.
9. To bear injuries patiently out of regard to this Day of Judgment, when God will set all things to rights, and take care, that we shall lose nothing by our sufferings, p. 359.
10. To consider particularly, that it will be more tolerable for Heathens, and Professed Infidels at this Day, than for Christians, p. 362.
11. To make this Day a Motive to Christian Charity, and Compassion, p. 368.
12. Not to suffer our selves to be discouraged from admiring those men, who have always lived in the Thoughts and Contemplations of this future Judgment, p. 374.



Eccles:

## Eccles. xi. 9.

*Rejoyce, O young Man, in thy Youth,  
and let thy Heart cheer thee in the  
days of thy YOUTH, and walk in the  
ways of thy Heart, and in the sight  
of thine Eyes; but know thou, that  
for all these things God will bring  
thee into Judgment.*

**T**HERE is no Man certainly better able to give us so true an account of the nature, extent, danger, exit, and end of sensual pleasure, as *Solomon*; he walk'd through the whole Garden, tasted of all the Fruits, smelt to every Flower, and I believe many times sinned, not so much out of fondness to the sin, as for tryals sake, to acquaint himself with the nature of the folly, and to see, whether there was really that satisfaction in it, which the bruitish part of the

B      World

World said, there was: But while he tryed experiments upon the Viper, the Beast flew into his Face, and Poyson'd the *Empirick*. He went on in these slippery ways, and walk'd on this sea of Glass a considerable time, spread the Sails of his sensual desires, and bid his carnal mind ask, and crave whatever it could fancy, and if either Love or Mony, or Force could procure it, it should have it. He hug'd all the little shooting flames he met with, and kissed every thing, that had the name, and reputation of Mirth and Jollity.

But see the sad *Catastrophe*, and woful turn of that pleasant Wheel, when he thought himself in *Paradise*, he found himself in *Hell*, and that which tickled his fenses at the first, proved after some time his greatest torment, and vexation; Providence can be silent for a time, but at last the sleeping Lyon wakes, and roars so, that all the Beasts of the Field



Field do tremble, and *Solomon*, on whose head the Candle of the Lord had shined so long, found that light at last go out in a snuff, and himself the object of Gods wrath, and indignation, and that makes him impart this sad *memento*, to the Man, who hath Blood, and Youth, and Strength enough to be vain, and foolish; *Rejoyce, O young Man, in thy YOUTH, and let thy Heart cheer thee in the days of thy YOUTH, &c.*

By way of Explication, I must take notice of these few things:

1. That the words *young Man*, and *Youth* in Scripture, especially in this Book are not only meant of that time, we commonly allow to Youth, which is from Ten or Fourteen to Twenty or Five and Twenty, but include all that Age which is fit for action, and the Hebrew words import so much, being derived from a Root, implying choice, and election; so that the time here aimed at,

is the chiefeſt time of our life, or  
that time, which any Man of ſenſe  
would chufe for action.

2. That thoſe ſentences, which  
ſound like exhortations, are perfectly  
Ironical, or ſpoke by way of *deriſion*,  
as if we ſhould ſay to a Man; *Go  
play the Fool, burn thy Finger  
in the Candle, and ſee, what thou  
wilt get by it*, whereby we do not  
mean that he ſhould do ſo, but do  
rather expreſſ the fillineſſ, and ſim-  
plicity of the thing, to make him  
avoid it; and ſuch Ironical ex-  
preſſions, or mocking exhortati-  
ons, are very frequent in Scripture,  
as *I Reg. 18. 27. Cry aloud, for he is  
asleep*, which is a kind of mocking the  
ſtupid Priests of *Baal*, that called on  
a Stock or Stone, ſo *Jer. 49. 11. Leave  
thy Fatherleſſ Children, and let thy  
Widows truſt in me*, i. e. Ay, go,  
comfort thy ſelf with this, that *I*  
will take care of thy Fatherleſſ Chil-  
dren, and provide for thy Widows,  
but thou ſhalt find thy ſelf ege-  
giouſly

ously mistaken ; so here, *Rejoyce O young Man*, &c. i. e. go play the Mad-man , let thy sensual Appetite rove, gratifie thy Flesh, please thy besotted Heart, fix thine Eyes on what Beauty thou thinkest fit, sing care, and reason, and thy wits away, and see what the Issue of all will be, and so much is evident from the following words , which are a bridle to all these extravagancies , and the gall that embitters all these sweets, and therefore the *Chal-dew Paraphrase* justly turns these mock-exhortations into a serious Admonition, *walk in humility, let not thine Eyes gaze upon that which is evil, but be exceeding cautious ;* and so the *Septuagint*; *walk spotless in the ways of thy Heart, and not in the lust of thine Eyes.*

3. God brings a Man into Judgment two ways, either by causing his Conscience to awake with horrour in this life, and laying some other heavy affliction upon him, and

there is mercy in this process, for this may yet lead the forlorn Soul to serious thoughts of repentance, bring the pangs, and throws of the New Birth upon her, and deliver her into a New Creature; *Or where God intends a higher degree of wrath, and indignation, he lets the jovial sinner alone on this side Hell, and the burthen shall not fall on him, till he comes to look the angry Judg in the Face, at which time, as the Surprize will be greater, so the horrour and anguish of mind, which will seize on the sinner, will like Nebuchadnezzars Furnace, prove seven times hotter than ordinary, upon which follows eternal despair, and endless howling, and gnashing of Teeth.*

The result of all, is this Proposition:

*That the prospect of a future Judgment, is enough to embitter all the sensual and carnal delights of Men, particularly of young Men, and to bring*

bring a damp upon the most Touthful, and most jovial temper imaginable : Not only the sense of the Text, I have already laid down imports so much, but there is this farther in it, that the wise Man seems to couch his argument plainly thus ; do but take a view of that dreadful Judg-  
ment, God is resolved to bring thy guilty Soul to, and thou wilt not dare to indulge thy self in the mad rejoycings of thy Youth, nor walk in the ways, and after the fancies of thy corrupted Heart, nor suffer thy wanton Eyes to fix on those ob-  
jects, from which God hath bid thee turn thy Face away.

You know the story of the Young Gallant, who riding by a lonely *Hermits Cell*, and finding the solitary Man vcry devout and fervent in Prayer, and looking with a severe and mortified countenance, called to him, *Father, Father*, what a fool are you to debar your self of the charming refreshments, and plea-

sures of this life and live here immured, within Walls of Mud, and Clay ; What if there should be no other World to what purpose is all this rigour, and mortification ? The *Hermit* heard him , and replyed, Ay but Friend, What if there should be one ? Where are you then ? What a Fool will you be then ? How will you wish, that you had been in my condition ? The youngster startled at these words, went home, left his Women, and his Swine, his Lusts, and dry Husks of bruitish delights, and like the Prodigal became another Man.

The truth is, we have seen this prospect of a future judgment have very strange effects upon a Man, who was not apt to be frightened with sad *Prognostications*, and that was *Felix*, a Person ; who had drunk as deep of the stolen Waters of sensuality, as any Man then living, for he lay in the embraces of *Drusilla*, who was another Mans Wife, and enjoy'd that

that Beauty, which his lustful appetite desired without lett or controul, yet behold when St. Paul reasoned of temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come, the Text saith; *Felix trembled.* *Act. 24. 25.*

The Sermon awakened

the notions of Divine justice, that were engraven on the Tables of his Heart, made him uneasie, put him into consternation, and for the present forced him to loath the Bed, where his abomination was wrought.

We are told of a custom in some Kingdom, that the night before a Condemned Malefactor is to die, a very shrill Trumpet sounds before the Prison Door, which is a certain sign that he is to die next day, and before whose Door soever the fatal Trumpet sounds over night, no Prayers, no Tears, whatever condition he is of, or whatever Figure he makes in the World, can save him from being Executed.

It

It happen'd in proceſs of time  
that the King, who had made this  
Law, after he had ſtreamed out a  
conſiderable part of his life in ex-  
travagant actions, on a ſudden be-  
came ſerious, was often ſeen to retire  
into his Closet, gave ſtrict order for  
extermination of all vices, and though  
before he had doated on Mirth, and  
Jests, and ſensual Satisfactions, yet  
these were now all abandon'd and  
turn'd into a ſcene of gravity, and ſo-  
briety; ſuch an alteration, we muſt  
think muſt be a very ſtrange ſurprize  
to Courtiers, who impatient of  
this change, and ſuppoſing it to be  
a fit of Melancholy, took the free-  
dom to ask him, what the reaſon  
of this Reformation was; The Kings  
Brother eſpecially, none of the moſt  
Religious, fought often to divert him,  
tempting him to ſee Shows, and Plays,  
and Women, and ſuch baits as ſerved  
either to plant, or cheriſh vanity in  
his mind, and affections, but all in  
vain.

One Night, the King desirous to bring his Brother to a better sense of Spiritual things, bids the fatal Trumpet to be sounded before the jolly Princes house, who sensible of the meaning of that noise, that he was to die next morning, starts out of his Bed, throws by his stately Robes, puts on a ragged Garment, weeps Rivers of Tears, and a mighty horror seizes his mind, and as soon as it was day comes to the King in this posture, and intercedes for his Life, to whom the King said, O Brother, are you frightened with the sound of this Trumpet, which foretells my Subjects approaching, and inevitable Death, and doth this noise force you into Tears, and Sackcloath, and humble supplications, and can you blame me for being serious, who know not how soon the Archangels Trumpet, of far greater consequence, and importance than this, will sound in mine ears, and summon me and you,

and

and all my Subjects to the Judgment seat of God, and perhaps to eternal despair, and agonies. Go home, said he, and by my example learn to despise the World, and prepare for that Day.

But this subject will invite us to a larger discourse, and therefore it will be necessary to enquire,

1. What reason we have to believe, that there is a Day of Judgment.

2. What there is in that future Judgment, that's able to cast a damp on the Mirth, and Jollities of Men, especially the younger sort.

3. How the prospect of that Judgment must be managed, that it may actually damp, and put a stop to these carnal delights.

4. Whether every Man is bound to embitter his carnal delights with this prospect.

5. Whether upon this account a Man be obliged to mind nothing, that favours of Worldly delight and sensual satisfaction.

1. What

i. What reason have we to believe, that there is a day of Judgment.

Having to deal with Christians, at least with Men that profess themselves such, this query seems needless, for the Scripture which the Christian World pretends to believe to be derived from God, is full of passages of this Nature, and assures us, that this belief of a future Judgment is as ancient, as the Creation of the World; *For Enoch the seventh from Adam, who in all probability had it from his ancestors, Propheſied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with Ten thousand of his Saints, to Execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodlily committed, and of their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him,* Jude v. 14, 15. And this Faith hath been followed by all the succeeding Saints, Patriarchs, Prophets, and judicious Men, was

was confirmed by the great *Messiah*, the Lord *Jesus*, and his Apostles, who gave us a more lively description of it, and hath since been entertained by all the Christian World, at least in profession, though there are but few, that act, and live like persons influenced, or overaw'd by that belief, so that, if Christians keep close to their principles, it can be no difficult thing, to perswade them to believe that, which they imbibe with their Mothers-Milk, and education advances into an open profession, and daily declaration.

But we have seen and do see a strange degenerateness in most Christians, and not a few that go under that name, though they do not openly question this truth, yet they either live as if they did, or infidelity reigns secretly in their Hearts, and it's to be feared, that whatever their Tongues may speak, in their minds they are not fully perswaded of it.

And

And were such Men willing to be perswaded, it should be no contemptible argument to convince them, one would think, that the greatest part of the World is of that belief, not only *Christians* but *Jews*, *Mahometans*, and the *Heathens* themselves; that it is a grand Article of the Jewish Faith, none can deny that ever conversed with them; that the *Mahometans* are stedfast and sincere in their assertion and clear in this point, any one may see, that hath read their *Alcoran*; and that the Heathen World is no stranger to it appears from what their *Sybilline Oracles*, their *Philosophers* and *Poets* have professed.

The *Sybilline Oracles* indeed are suspected by learned Men, and look'd upon, as Pious frauds, used by the Fathers, thereby to convince the Heathens the better of the Mysteries of Christianity, though it will not enter into my head, how the Fathers could have confirmed any of their

their Doctrines from these Oracles, if the Heathens they had to deal with either were not satisfied that those things had been spoken by their *Prophetesses*, or had believed that the Fathers had foisted those Oracles into the *Sybils* writings, which either were not, or had never been there, for this would have been so far from being an Argument against the Pagans , that the Christians would have laid themselves open in nothing so much, as in these Quotations, had they been false or supposititious.

*Plat. in Phaed.* However *Plato's* writings have been convey'd to us, without any signal corruption, and he gives us a very accurate account of this great Day, as *Hydaspes* an Ancient King of the *Medes* had done before him, and the Heathen Poets , though indulging their fancies in somethings; yet have delivered many excellent truths to us, whereof this future Judg-  
ment

ment is not the least ; we need go no farther, then the Sixth Book of *Virgil's Aeneis*, where the Opinions of the Ancient Heathen Sages are collected and expressed in Verse, and it's worth observing, that he makes his Judge *Rhadamantus* inflict particular punishments on those Souls, that have differred their Repentance to their Death-Beds.

And how can we imagine, that the whole World, at least the wiser part of it, should so unanimously believe a future Judgment after this Life, if either there had not been a great propensity in their Nature, to believe the notion, or reason had not convinced them of the certainty and reality of the thing ; If we grant, that God hath given a Law to Man, we must necessarily grant, that there must be a Judge to call those to an account, who have violated and broke those Laws. Man we see is capable of being govern'd by a Law, and without a Law to govern him,

C would

would run wild and become a meer  
bruit, we must therefore necessarily  
believe that God hath given us a  
Law; and what Law more suitable  
to his Nature, or the principle of  
reason, than what we have in the Bi-  
ble, which is indeed the Law of Na-  
ture, expressed in livelier and more  
legible characters? it's fit therefore,  
there should a time come, when the  
Obedience and Disobedience of Men  
may be taken notice of, and the  
Obedient rewarded, and the Disobe-  
dient punished. God hath made  
Man his *Viceroy* here on Earth, to

which purpose *David* said,

*Pſ. 8. 6.* *Thou hast set him over the  
Works of thy Hands, and  
hast put all things under his Feet,* and  
experience shews, that Man hath a  
dominion over all irrational Crea-  
tures; and is it not convenient, that  
at the end of the World, when all  
Men have acted their part on this  
Stage, this *Viceroy* should be ex-  
amined, and asked, how true he hath  
been

been to his Sovereign King ? What he hath done with the Creatures which have been given him for his use ? And whether he hath not minded his own business, more than his Masters ?

If there is no Judgment to come, there can be no God, for without a future retribution this God cannot be just, and a God, that is not just, is imperfect , and if imperfect , he cannot be God ; so true is that saying of *Averroes*, that whatever is most Noble and most Praise-worthy in Man, must be attributed to the best, and greatest Being, God blessed for evermore : But Justice we see, is that, which makes a Prince on Earth great, and is one of the highest Perfections he is capable of, which was the reason that when *Ptolomy* asked the Seventy *Interpreters* of the Jewish Law, What King lived freest from Fear and Violence ? He was Answered, *He that exercises Justice; punishes the Bad, and rewards the Good;*

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and consequently this Justice must be ascribed to God, as the most perfect Being ; it would be the most unreasonable thing imaginable, that those, who love and fear him most, should be most oppressed, and go without reward, and those, that abuse, and dishonour him, slight, and undervalue him, should live prosperously, and never feel his displeasure, or indignation. If God be wise, and just, this cannot be ; and since this reward of the Innocent, and severity on the Wicked is not administered, and dispensed in this World, it must needs follow, that it must be in another and the day of this future recompence, we call, the day of Judgment.

And though the apprehensions of that vast multitude of Men, which believe or profess it, about the manner, and method of this day, be very different, yet it is enough, that all agree in the thing, even those, who have not the revealed Scriptures of

of the Old, and New Testament; from whence we may justly fetch the truest, and exactest description of it, those Revelations, and Writings, the Christians have, and what is said in them concerning the righteousness of God, being most agreeable to the Nature of God, and the Actions of Men, and the Rules, the Supreme *Architect* hath engraven on our reason;

That there are some Men, who deny a future Judgment, we need wonder no more than we do, that the Fool should say in his Heart, there is no God. That which makes a Man deny the one, tempts him to be bold in disbelieving the other. It's the interest of a sinful life, there should be no Retribution, and how can a Man act against God with any cheerfulness, or alacrity, except he puts him out of his thoughts, and to complete the folly, fancies, that he'll never call him to a reckoning. It's Mens vices, that are the cause of their Atheism, and were it

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not, that they are inamoured with their lusts, their reason would soon joyn issue with these verities : It's not for want of Arguments that Men are unbelievers in this knowing Age, but for want of sobriety, and consideration, and while they suffer themselves to be drawn away by their sensual appetite, no marvel, if in time, their Flesh encroaches upon their Understanding, and their brutish desires corrupt their very Reason, and they begin to think, that God is altogether such a one, as they themselves. But let's see

2. What there is in the prospect of this future Judgment that is able to damp the greatest Mirth and Jollity.

1. In the prospect of this Judgment, there appears a very serious Judge, even the mighty *Jesus*, the Son of God, who was seen to weep often, but to Laugh never ; even he that came into the World to teach Men self-denial in sensual pleasures not only unlawful, such as wantonness,

tonness , Effeminacy , Fornication , Adultery , Uncleanness , Drunkenness , Feeding our Eyes with Lustful Objects , and which produce ill desires in us , deriding and jeering our Neighbours for their infirmities , luxury in cloathing , eating and drinking , mimick gestures , filthy jesting , love-tricks , talking loosely , &c. But in some measure in Lawful also , especially , where a greater good is to be promoted , and hath bid us use these outward comforts , as if we used them not , and rejoice in them , as if we rejoiced not , with fear and cautiousness , that they draw not our hearts away , and with a generous indifference , as Persons , who have laid up their Treasure in another World , and look for the Blessed hope , and the Glorious appearing of the great God .

Such a Judge appears in this prospect ; one who descended into this vally of Tears upon the most serious errand imaginable , even to call sinners to repentance , to make them

sensible of what God expects at their hands, to convince them, that they have Souls to be saved, to assure them, that though God is patient, yet he will not be everlastinglly affronted by bold, and daring Men, and Judges otherwise of things, than besotted mortals, and is in good earnest, when he bids them set their affections upon the things which are above; one who will not be put off with fooling, nor spare a Malefactor for a jest, one who gave Mankind a being, and habitation here, not to play, but to work, not to mind trifles, and rattles, but the concerns of a tremendous Eternity; a Judge, whose Eyes are like flames of Fire, and his Feet like Brass glowing in a Furnace, who was indeed a Lamb, when he had his conversation here on Earth, and like one was led to the slaughter, not opening his Mouth, and is still so to all those, that take his Yoke upon them, and learn of him to be humble and meek, but will

will at last appear in all the Robes of Majesty, which the Clouds of Heaven and a guard of Ten thousand times ten thousand Angels, and all the light of the Throne of God can furnish him with.

This Judge knows all the secrets of our hearts, and before him all things are naked, and open, and no creature can hide himself, he is one who cannot be imposed upon by sophistry, nor wheadled into a wrong Judgment of things by equivocation; whose presence will shake the World, and put the greatest Captains, and stoutest Souldiers into fits of trembling, and make them cry to Rocks, and Mountains, Fall on us, and hide us, from the Face of him, that sits upon the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

This Judg is not to be corrupted, nor to be bribed, cannot be carried away with outward respects, which make Judges here on Earth pervert Judgment; these Judge too often according

cording to affection, and call white black, and black white, good evil, and evil good, defend vice under the notion of vertue, rashness under the name of fortitude, laziness under the colour of moderation, and timorousness under the title of cautiousness ; these do too often become advocates for the prodigal, and call them liberal and generous, the Covetous with them pass for frugal, the Lascivious for Courtiers, the talkative for affable, the obstinate for Men of resolution, and the dull and idle for persons, who act with great deliberation ; Love to their kindred, and Blood makes them extenuate faults in their relations, and that which appears an inexpiable crime in strangers, seems but a peccadillo, or infirmity in a Child or Brother ; *Herod* hurried away with his Amours to *Herodias*, beheads the Innocent Baptist ; *Flaminius* out of Love to his Harlot violates the Publick Faith ; *Julius Cæsar* out of fondness to *Cleopatra*,

*patra*, gives Sentence against her Brothers; *David's* inordinate affection to a Rebel Son, gives the Army charge to take care of the Young Man *Absalom*;

But the Judge we speak of is of another temper; it was his Character here on Earth, that he was no respecter of Persons, nor could the Sons of *Zebedee* prevail with him to place them, one at his right hand, the other at his left: and it was not kindred he would advance to that dignity, but such for whom it was prepared by his Father; Hence it was, that his Mother, and Brethren found no farther acceptance with him, then they were obedient to his word, and he deliver'd it as his Eternal rule, *They that do the will of my Father, they are my Mother, and Brethren, and Sisters,* and with this motto he gave a reprimand to the Woman that cryed, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee, and the Paps which thou hast sucked;* Yea blessed are they said he, who

who hear the word of God, and do it ; and he that here on Earth could not be wrought upon by Kindred, or Consanguinity, nor blinded by Affection, sure will not be misled by these false Fires, in the great day of Judgment.

Judges here on Earth, if passion, or hatred to a Man reigns in their minds, are too often tempted to pass wrong Sentences ; what the effects of *Progne's* hatred to her Husband *Tereus* were, and how the innocent Son suffered by it ; how dire the hatred of *Medea* to *Jason* was , and drew the death of their Children after it, how *Josephs* Brethren condemned that guiltless Soul, meerly because they hated and envied him, and how the Jews dealt with our great Master the Lord Jesus upon this principle, both civil and sacred Histories do sufficiently manifest. But this impotent passion cannot light upon him, who is to be the Judge in the Last day. He hates nothing, that he

he hath made, and is so great a lover of all Mankind, that he would have all Men to be saved, and come to the knowledg of the truth, and would give them all Eternal life, if they would but take the way, he prescribes them. The Devils themselves, could they be penitent, would be received into favour, and let a Man be born of a Jew or Turk, if he do but bring forth fruits meet for repentance, neither his odious Name, nor loathsome kindred shall exclude him from his bosom.

He hath no secret spleen, or pique against any Person living, and though God under the Law seems to vent a particular displeasure against the seven Nations, and especially against the *Amalekites*, yet it was for their monstrous, and unnatural sins, that his just displeasure rose against them, not any private grudge, or envy he bore to them as Men, above other of his Creatures.

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Such imperfections are not incident to our Judge, who detests and abhors no person , but what makes himself deformed, and odious to his purer Eyes, and in every Nation , whosoever serves him, and works righteousness, is accepted of him.

Fear very often prevails upon Govenours, and Men in Office here on Earth, that they dare not speak their mind in passing Sentence ; fear of offending a Favourite , or losing their places , or being accounted pragmatical, or missing such a Pre-ferment , distorts their Judgments , and makes them take wrong measures of things. This makes Laws Cobwebs for great Men, and traps to catch lesser Animals ; this tempted *Pilate* to crucifie the Holy *Jesus*, and though he was sensible of his Innocence, yet the word , *If thou let this Man go, thou art not Cæsars Friend*, turns the Scales , and makes him comply with the fury of the People ; But such fears can-  
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not fall on this Judge of the whole Earth ; Whom should he fear ? Of whom should he be afraid ? He is omnipotent ; will a Painter be afraid of his Picture, or a Man of his Shadow ? Man is but Gods Picture, and his Shadow, and shall the Almighty be afraid of his own Creature, whom he can crush into *Atoms*, into nothing with a frown ? Who can make this Judge happier than he is already ? What place can any Creature promise him, who doth what he pleases in all the Armies of Heaven, and among all the Inhabitants of the Earth ?

There is no carressing him with Gold, for all Men and Women will appear before him poor, and miserable, destitute of that pomp, and grandeur, and finery, on which here they doted ; and suppose, they could carry their Wealth with them to the great Tribunal, What can they give him, who commands all the Treasures of the World, whose is the Earth and the

the fulness thereof, and who is himself the giver of those things, which Mankind preposterously place their happiness in? Here the greatest Emperors and Princes must appear without their Guards without their Armies, without their Swords and Spears; Here Popes must leave their Triple Crowns behind them; Kings their Diadems, Bishops their Mitres, Noblemen their Lacqueys, and all stand naked, and unarmed before the Throne; and suppose that Men were permitted to come with their former retinue and attendance into the presence of the Almighty, yet this would cause no fear in our Judge, who will come attended with an innumerable company of Angels, one of which did once slay One hundred fourscore and five thousand Men in the *Affyrian* Camp.

Such a serious, such a magnificent Judge appears, in the prospect of that future Judgment even *Jesus*, the Son of the living God. He who was once despised

spised and rejected of men, will at this time sit on the Throne of Glory, and all Eyes shall see him; and though God himself is sometimes said to be the Judge, sometimes *Christ* as *Man*, sometimes the *Apostles*, sometimes the *Saints* in general, sometimes even Wicked men; yet this implies no contradiction. In God no doubt lies the Sovereign Power, and no Creature can either absolve, or condemn without his Will and Order; and this his Power of judging in the last Day he hath committed to the Son of Man, or to *Christ* as *Man*, whom he hath not only made Heir of all things, but for a reward of his Sufferings given a Name above every Name, and delegated him to be Judge of the Quick and Dead; and this glorious Commissioner calls in the *Apostles* in the first place, and all other Saints after them, to sit with him on the Bench, and by their suffrage to applaud the Sentence he shall pass on the stubborn,

and obstinate ; wicked men shall be Judges only comparatively as the means of Grace they had, were less powerful than those of their Neighbours, and yet went beyond them in Goodness and Holiness, at least were not so bad as they ; and consequently shall be Witnesses against them, and in a manner judge and doom them to unspeakable anguish ; because they trampled on the Grace, which was offered to their Souls, in which sense the men of Nineveh, and the Queen of Sheba shall rise in Judgment with that Generation, who saw the Miracles of Christ and repented not, and condemn them , because a greater than Jonas, a greater than Solomon was here.

2. In the prospect of this Judgment there appears a very strict examination of what we have done in the Flesh, not only of visible Actions, but of Words spoken in secret, and Thoughts, Desires, Intentions, and Resolutions of our Hearts ; an Ex-

Examination, which will be a very great surprize to the Sinner, who hath made light of things of this Nature; for *there is nothing cover'd, that shall not be revealed, neither hid, that shall not be brought to light*, saith he, that understood this Day better than any Man living, *Luke 12. 2.*

Not only the bigger Crimes, such as Murder, Adultery, Fornication, Blasphemy, unnatural Lust, Stealing, Perjury, Atheism, Idolatry, Apostacy, Cursing, Swearing, Drunkenness, Extortion, Covetousness, Contempt of God, and of his Word, &c. will here be manifested and censured, aggravated and searched into, but the secret lustings of the Soul, the hidden things of Dishonesty, the cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lay in wait to deceive; the Mines, and Pits, men have privily digg'd for their Neighbours, their underhand dealings, their Chamber practices, their sinful contrivances in the dark, or in their Closets,

their Sailing to the Port of Vain-glor-y by a side-wind , their speaking Truth for ill ends, their misinterpretations of their Brethrens words and actions, their reporting things to another's prejudice ; all these will be laid open before the whole World.

Sinner, thy unchaste Embraces, thy impure Wishes, thy wanton Glances, thy lascivious Looks, thy delight in amorous Songs, thy acting thy Lust over in thy Mind again, thy ruminating upon thy last Nights revelling, thy tempting thy self to sin, and being thine own Devil, and thy committing impurity with thy self, will all be set in order before thee, and the Judge will demand, how it was possible for thee, who didst profess thy self a follower of the Chaste, and Holy *Jesus*, to dishonour him, and his Religion, with such extravagant actions, and irreligious proceedings ? Thy slovenliness in Devotion, thy Hypocrisy, and seeming to be better than really thou wert, thy inattentive

tentive Prayers, the willful wan-drings of thy Thoughts, when thou wast speaking to God, thy not re-deeming the time, thy neglecting to observe the greater, and weightier matters of the Law, thy mispend-ing thy precious Hours, thy idle-ness and laziness in Gods Vineyard, thy not giving to the Poor according to thy Ability, thy Pride, and se-cret Envy, and desire of Applause, and finis-ter ends and designs in Preach-ing, Praying, Adminis-tring, and receiving of the Holy Sacra-ment, and in other good Works, thy flat-tering, and dissem-bl-ing, and unwillingness to do good, when thou hadst a fair opportunity ; these will all be laid open to thy sorrow, and confu-sion. Thy not being led by good Examples, thy slighting wholesom Admonitions, thy laughing at excel-lent Coun-sel, thy scorning Reproof, and hating him, that gave it, thy re-solvedness to do that again, for which thou wast reproved , the delay

of thy seriousness, thy suffering the convictions thou hadst to be choaked with the cares, and Riches of the World. Thy being at an Ale-house, when thou shouldst have been in thy Closet, thy being at a Play, when thy Hand, and Heart should have been lifted up in holy Supplications, thy being in Bed, when thou shouldst have been upon thy Knees, and neglecting a greater Duty for a trifle, or impertinence, the Supper of the Lamb for Farms, and Oxen, and thy preferring the silliest, and most ridiculous Discourses, before a conference about the momentous concerns of Eternity; these will all be rehears'd at large, *for I say unto you, that every idle word, that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment saith Christ, Matth. 12. 36.* Not having repented of things of this Nature, either through unbelief, or carelessness, when these points shall come to be examined, and thy Soul interrogated upon these Particulars,

culars, and so many too, it stands to reason, that it must necessarily cause very great astonishment; for these things were most certainly forbid in that Gospel, thou didst profess, and that notwithstanding, as if such things had never been spoken of, thou shouldst slight them, undervalue them, not think them worth thy care to shun them; what sad reflexions will this Examination cause?

In vain dost thou hope, that Eagles catch no Flies, and that God will never mind such small trivial, and inconsiderable Errors. He that minded these smaller faults, as they seem to carnal men, and took notice of them in this life, may justly be supposed resolved to call men to an account for them in that Solemn Day of Reckoning, for indeed God's proceedings, here are an Emblem of his process in Judgment hereafter.

Eating of the forbidden Fruit in Paradise seem'd but an inconsiderable oversight, yet did God curse the

very Earth for that Fact, made it bring forth Bryars and Thorns, for the future condemned *Adam* to the eating of Bread in the Sweat of his Brows, and threatned the Woman his Partner in the Errour, to multiply her pain and sorrows. It doth not appear from *Moses*, that the Children of God or Professours of the true Religion did any more, then Marry with the Daughters of the profaner Crew, a small fault, a bruitish Man would think, yet was the insolence lash'd, and the inordinate Fire quenched with a deluge of Waters; *Lots Wife* looks back to *Sodom*, out of curiosity perhaps, a venial folly, natural to Women, it seems to be, and no more, yet for doing so is turned into a Pillar of Salt; *Achan* as a Souldier, (and that sort of men we know, live much upon Prey) takes in a time of War a golden Wedge, and *Babylonian Mantle* (no great matter one would think) yet God orders him to be stoned; *Uzzah* out

out of his over-care that the Ark might not fall, lays hold on't, to support it, yet for doing so, is struck with Death immediately ; the *Prophet*, who came from *Judah* to Prophecy against the Altar of *Bethel*, in suffering himself to be persuaded to eat Bread, by another Prophet, who pretended Visions too, to ones thinking committed no great Crime, yet God revenged his Disobedience with a violent Death for a Lion sent by God, slew him. *Moses* grows impatient at the Waters of *Meribah*, who would not have done so that had to deal with so stubborn a People? yet that act of mistrust, and impatience cost him the loss of the Land of *Canaan*, he had so long desired to behold; the People of *Israel* murmured in the Wilderness, a thing that People might easily do, who were kept so long in a barren Desert, without seeing an end of their Travel, yet of that vast Number of Six hundred thousand men not one enters into the promised Land, save *Caleb*, and

and *Joshua*; *Ananias* and *Sapphira* seemed to be guilty of no great misdemeanour, for they were content to give half of their Estate to the Poor, but kept the other to themselves, yet is God so angry, that he punishes their violating of their Vow to give all, with sudden death. Go now Sinner, and fancy, that God will not call thee to an account for faults, the World makes nothing of, because he doth not do it here, he will certainly do it hereafter, and the Examples of the Bible are *Items* that he will do so.

It's no matter, whether the thing, in which the offence is committed seem inconsiderable or no; the disobedience is all in all; if God commands thee to avoid a thing that's trivial, it's the easier task to do according to his will, and because it was so easie to obey, and thou wouldest not, it's that which makes thy disobedience grievous, and heinous, though the matter of the offence seems trivial, and contemptible. *Rebellion* is

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as the sin of Witchcraft, and Stubbornness is as Iniquity, and Idolatry, said Samuel in a case much like this, where the

<sup>1 Sam. 15.</sup>  
<sup>23.</sup>

thing done by Saul was so far from seeming ill, that it appeared like a work of mercy, and an act of gratitude, for he spared the best of the Sheep, and brought home Agag the King alive in Triumph, yet this excused not the Fact, but rather aggravated it; for hath the Lord as great delight in burnt Offerings, and Sacrifices, as in obeying the Voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken, than the Fat of Rams, as the Prophet tells him,

v. 22.

This confirms the Method of Christ's proceeding in the last Day; and indeed how could that Judgment be perfect, if the lesser, as well as the greater Errors were not to be accounted for, and mens disobedience against the lesser, as well as the greater commands of the Gospel were not to

to be manifested, and proclaimed before the World? and though this is chiefly to be understood of men, who die without sincere Repentance, yet it's more than probable, that even the sins of those who were justified and sanctified will be brought to light, and discovered before the vast Assembly, that shall appear before the Throne of God in that Day, not that they need fear any hurt or disadvantage, that will arise from that examination, and publication, but by these means both the Glory of God, and the Glory of these true Converts will appear more illustrious; the Glory of God, who hath snatch'd such Persons like Brands out of the Fire, pull'd them out of the miry Clay, in which they were ready to perish, and taken them out of the Devils clutches, than which, there cannot be a greater sign of the power and goodness of God; and who sees not how much it will be for the Credit and Honour of the Saints themselves?

For

~~E~~ to let the World see ~~see~~ the Bands, and Ropes, that once held them, and how like *Sampson*, they broke them all, and carried away the Gates of *Gaza*, and escaped out of Hell in despight of all the Devils, that raged, and storm'd, and domineer'd there, What can be said more for their renown and glory ? What hurt doth the Penitent *Mary Magdalen* receive by the *Evangelists* recording, or our speaking of her former Whoredoms ? No more will the revealing of Holy mens faults, and errors in the last Day eclipse , but rather advance their goodness, because they extricated themselves from the Snare of the Fowler, and generously rouzed themselves from their fatal slumber, and in despight of Temptations would press towards the Mark of endless Glory. Their Errors being published with their true Repentance, and change of Life, justifies God in accepting of them, while he refuses others, and proclaims their Wisdom in choosing

choosing the better part, & condemns the impenitent, and discovers how justly they are left to God's Vengeance, who would in despite of all the offers of God's favour, prefer their dirt and trash before an invisible, lasting, and solid felicity: And though it's true, that Holy mens Sins are said in Scripture to be covered, and God is brought in, promising to remember their Sins no more, but to drown them all in the depth of the Sea, yet can the meaning of such passages be no other, than this, that God will not remember them, so as to make use of their Errours against them to their ruine and condemnation ; notwithstanding this, he may justly publish them, that their Wisdom being compared with their Folly, may appear to go beyond it, and themselves from the Thoughts of their former Sins may reap the greater comfort, as *Agathocles* being advanced from the Trade of a Potter to a Throne, at his Meals would still make use of Earthen

Earthen Pots, not only to remember his Original, but from the Contemplation of his former poor and miserable condition to increase his present satisfaction ; for as in our fall from a high Degree of Prosperity to the greatest poverty and misery, nothing torments the Mind more than the remembrance, that once it was otherwise with us, so where Providence is so kind, as to bring us out of a horrible Pit, and sets our Feet upon a Rock, the remembrance of our former misery signally increases our joy, and comfort in the present Mercy.

So then, in this great Day all mens Sins will be examin'd, and publish'd, though with different effects, the Penitents, to their Absolution and Glory : The Impenitents, to their Terrour and Condemnation ; for to be presented there with a list of innumerable Offences and Affronts of the Divine Majesty which their own Consciences know, and must acknowledge,

knowledge, which yet they either never seriously thought of, or never seriously attempted to forsake; or if they repented, discovered only a mock-repentance ; what effects can this be supposed to cause but monstrous confusion, and horrour of mind? Enough to put men into the greatest rage and distraction, to think, that they should neglect purchasing the Pearl of Price, when it was offered to their choice by God and Man.

Here particular enquiry will be made, how we have discharged the Duties of our several Relations ; it's not the purple of Princes, nor the Rods, and Axes of Magistrates that will make the Almighty afraid of demanding of them, whether they have ruled their Subjects in the fear of God, shewn them a good example, and punished the obstinate, and encouraged the good, and made it their business to advance God's Glory, and to maintain the true Worship of the Living God ; nor will Subjects be

be excused here, neither must they think to come off, without making distinct answers to these Interrogatories, whether they have obey'd not only for Wrath but for Conscience-sake, whether they have behaved themselves peaceably under the Government, they have lived under; whether they have paid Tribute, to whom Tribute was due, Honour to whom Honour, and whether they have not used their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness.

In the same manner, Parents will be strictly examined, whether they have brought up their Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord; Children, whether they honoured their Parents as became Persons who under God owed their being to them; Servants, whether they served their Masters according to the Flesh in singleness of Heart, as unto Christ, and likewise all other Persons according to the relations, and Offices they stood in, for in all these relations,

men are Stewards, and both Reason, and God's Justice, and his Word require, that all should give an account of their Stewardship.

At this time the Soul being throughly a waken'd from her former Lethargy, every sin will appear more dreadful, every error more red, every fault more bloody, every offence blacker than ordinary, for the Fire of that Day doth not only scorch, but enlighten, and elevate the Soul into a thinking state, and none of the former Impediments will now be able to divert her Thoughts, which will be fix'd upon an offended God, and his Majesty, Greatness, and Holiness, and make at this time more sensible impressions on her, while every thing, especially, what hath been committed against God, will appear in more lively colours, and consequently, if the Conscience hath not the remembrance of a former sincere Repentance to support her self withal, the frights must necessarily be

be great, and the whole frame sink into inexpressible confusion.

There are innumerable sins, which neither Prince, nor Magistrate can take notice of; how many Poor are oppressed! how many innocent men wrong'd daily! A *Socrates* is abused, and hath no helper; but neither this Man's misery, nor the others oppression shall escape the Eyes of that all-seeing Judge, who will infallibly publish both the one and the other, and make good the Type St. John speaks of, *Revel. 6. 5. And I beheld a black Horse, & he that sat on him had a pair of Ballances in his Hand;* Ballances to weigh every Man's evil works, which if they be found to preponderate above the good, or to be pure sins, pure offences, without a godly sorrow to take off either the colour or the weight, all will be turned into blackness and desolation.

3. In the prospect of this Judgment, there appears a very wonderful Scene; the Person that is the

Judge, is the Lawgiver too, the Party offended the Witness, and his own Advocate : He that shall sit on the Tribunal in that Day was the Person, that came down from Heaven, and blessed the World with the equitable Precepts of the Gospel; it's he that went up into a Mountain, and from that Pulpit pronounced, *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted; Blessed are the Meek, for they shall inherit the Earth, Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled,* &c. Matt. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. It's he that came to undeceive both the Jewish and Heathen World in the false Notions, they had imbibed concerning their duty, and cleared the Moral Law of *Moses*, of the false Glosses, the *Pharisees* had put upon it, explain'd the will of God, set it naked, and pure before the People, he came to call to Repentance, and let them

them see what were the proper preparatives for the everlasting joys of Heaven : It's he who guarded the Law, which he promulgated with Sanctions suitable to his Majesty and Greatness, and as he made the rewards Eternal, so the punishments he threatened to the stubborn, and impenitent were endless too ; So it became him, who appeared in the World to offer infinite Mercy to poor Sinners, to reveal to them God's infinite Love to their Souls, and to acquaint them with the infinite condescension of the Son of God, who would humble himself to the Death of the Cross, to redeem them from the Bondage of the Devil.

He that came into this Valley of Tears with so much love and light about him, might justly enjoin reformation of the whole Man, and a transformation of the Mind, and temper of the Soul, and require a conformity to his own life, and insist upon mens becoming patient, and

humble, and charitable, and contented, and peaceable, and watchful over their Thoughts, and Words, and Actions, and Heavenly minded; How could this Grace, which appeared to all men, challenge less then self-denial, and contempt of the World, and living in the Thoughts, and Expectation of a better life, and seeking earnestly for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality?

And as he, that will be the Judge in that day, is the Law-giver too, so he understands best the meaning of his Laws, nor will tricks, and evasions, and false constructions of those Laws signify any thing before him, who will not depart from the sense his Eternal Wisdom put upon them, and which by his Prophets and Ministers he once caused to be proclaim'd in the Ears of men.

The Sinner in that day will have to do with Deputies, and Lieutnants, and Delegates, who too often make the Law a Nose of Wax, and

can

can turn, and interpret it to what sense they please, and their Interest dictates, are sometimes unskilful, and apt to mistake the Law of their Superiors, and these Laws not being of their own making, are the colder, or the more remiss in executing them; but here men shall see the Law-giver himself, who will not be put off with pretexts, and pretences, as ordinarily Deputies, and such Persons are, ~~are~~ who employ'd by the Supreme Law-givers in a Commonwealth, or Kingdom.

Even here on Earth, where the Lawgivers themselves sit Judges, the Malefactor must expect severer dealings; in this case, even *Lycurgus's Wife* shall not escape, that durst break her Husband's Law against riding in a Chariot during the time of Divine Service; and *Zaleucus* his Son must lose

*in his Eye* for slighting his Father's Orders against Adulterers, not to mention the Severities of *Epinomis* & *others*.

on their own Children where the Legislators have sat Judges of their Crimes, and Errours.

The Almighty Judg in that day will justly resent the affront done to his Laws, and indeed none is better able to declare the heinousness of such contempt than he , and this must necessarily encrease the Ferroure of that day.

And as he is the Law-giver, against whose Precepts the Sinner hath offended, so he is the Party offended too.

Sinner, This is he, whose Body, and Blood, thou hast so often receiv'd unworthily in the Sacrament ; this is he , to whose Croſs, thou hast been an Enemy so many years, on whose Merits thou hast trampled; whom thou hast so often Crucified afresh, whose Houſe thou haſt dishonoured, whose Gospel thou haſt been Aſhamed of; and therefore wonder not if ſuch thundersing Queſtions come forth .

forth from the Throne at last ; do'ſt  
not thou remember, how oft thou haſt  
broke through the Guards and Fences  
I haue ſet betwixt thee and ſin ?  
how couldſt thou find in thy Heart to  
afflict, and grieve me ſo often, who  
haue endured ſuch agonies already for  
thee on the Cross ? why wouldſt thou  
forſake me, the Fountain of Living  
VVaters ? How is it that thou waſt  
not afraid to make thy Belly, thy  
Gold, thy Harlot, and ſuch a great  
Man thy God : Did ever any Person  
oblige thee more than I ? Didſt thou  
ever receive ſuch Favours at any  
Man's hand, as thou haſt received  
at mine ? and why could not I have  
thy Heart, and thy will and affections ?  
Why muſt a ſottish Lust and  
Paſſion engroſſ thy deſires, and  
my Law be caſt behind thee ?

If ever Law-giver had reaſon to be  
offended, This Judge in the laſt Day  
hath ; for his Commandments were  
not grievous, his Yoke was eaſie,  
and his burthen light, all that was  
re-

required, was loye, and it's hard, if so small a Tribute for his ineffable and incomprehensible Mercies, must not be paid him. It's true, this love must extend, and branch it self into various acts of Meekness, and Patience, and Humility, &c. but still where love is the Principle, none of all the other things, which are required, can seem tedious, or difficult.

Nor is this all, for the same Judge will be Witness against the Sinner too: Indeed no Creature can be so true a Witness against him, as the Judge himself: There are many sins, no Creature ever saw, but he, and therefore who so fit a Witness against those Crimes, as he? *I will come near to you to judgment, & I will be a swift Witness against the Sorcerers, & against the Adulterers, & against the false Swarers, and against those that oppress the Hiring in his Wages, the Widow, and the Fatherless, and that turn aside the Stranger from his Right, and fear not me,*

*sai.*

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e,  
saith the Lord of Hosts, Mal. 3. 5. This Judge sees all, nor will the Sinner be able to elude this Testimony of the invisible God. *When thou wast under the Fig-tree, I saw thee,* said Christ to Nathanael; his Conscience knew, he had been there, and he believed. But this was in love.

In that Day, we speak of, such Language as this will be pronounced in wrath, and indignation, and therefore will cause other Thoughts in the Hearts of the Wretch, that shall hear it; *I thou careless Creature, couldst thou imagine that any thing was hid from me? Did not I see thee at such a time, in such a place, in such a Garden, in such a Chamber, playing the Rebel, and the Wanton? Did not I see thee treating with mine Enemies? Did not I see thee conspiring against me? Hadst not thou such base thoughts, such wicked intentions, such impure desires in such Company? I opened the Windows of Heaven, and look'd up-*

upon thee, when thou wast committing Fornication with such a Woman ? Wilt not thou believe me, who look'd within the Curtains, and saw thy abominations? Couldst thou think, I would look on, and not set thy sins in order before thee ?

There will be no contradicting of this Testimony, for thy Conscience, O Man, will immediately, join issue with it, and say, as *Nathan* to the guilty King : *Thou art the Man.* For, besides this grand Witness, there will abundance of other Witnesses come in, which will all help to cast thy impenitent Soul ; thy Conscience here will have a great share in the Accusation ; that Conscience which once thou didst smother, and curb, and put by, when it pull'd thee by the sleeve, and bid thee be wise, and serious ; that Conscience that once boggled and winced, when thou offered'st violence to it, and said to thee, as the *Baptist* to *Herod*, it is not lawful for thee to espouse this sin ; that Conscience, which was aware of this judg-

judgment, and gave thee warning, and could not with all the strongest arguments it used prevail with thee to stand in awe of God ; this like one of Job's Messengers when the House falls, and all these out-ward things are gone, alone escapes, to tell the Sinner of his folly.

Conscience even in this life doth sometime force the guilty, to make confession of their sins : It forced the Multitude that came to St. John, Matth. 3. 6. It forced Judas to cry, *I have betrayed Innocent Blood*, when no Creature prompted him to the confession. It forced those who had used curious Arts, Act. 18. 18, 19. to bring their Schemes and Figures, and Astrological Tables, and burn them before the Apostles of our Lord. How much greater then, may we suppose, will the force of it be in that day, when terror will surround it, when it will be readier to speak, and to accuse, then God to ask, and when no noise, no tumult, no croud, no business will be able to divert it ? With

With the Conscience, the Devils themselves will join, who are therefore emphatically call'd, *The Accusers of our Brethren*, Rev. 12. 10. These cannot but know our sins, for they were the tempters, and remember how we yielded, and consented to their suggestions. These were the constant, and indefatigable Observers of our lives. These watch'd our going out, and our coming in ; these were about us, when we lay down, when we rose, when we walk'd, and when we sat, and whatever we did ; these were still at hand to take notice of our doings, our words, and our behaviour : nor is their Memory so frail, as to forget it, nor their malice so little, as to let it slip, without making publication of it. These rejoice in our ruine, and will be sure to make the worst interpretation of our deportment. These are they, that presented us with charming Objects, and were restless till they had made us enamoured with them, first drove us into the Snare, and now will

will be ready to accuse us for being taken. And therefore the Fathers in their Discourses concerning this day, do justly bring in the Devil, arguing, and pleading with the Almighty Judg ; Behold these men ! it's true, they were thine by Creation, but they became mine by imitation of me ; they had thy Image upon their Souls, but see, they have defaced that , and chosen mine ; thou didst breath on them by thy holy Spirit, but they were more fond of my suggestions, than those motions. Thou didst indeed draw them with Cords of Love and by Temporal and Spiritual Mercies soughtest to make them in love with thy will, but they turned a deaf Ear to thy call, and invitation ; I never gave them any nor promised them any thing , yet they served me like Slaves ; thou courtedst them, and didst oblige them to love thee, yet they had rather be my Favourites, than thy darlings ; if thou didst command them any thing ,  
that

that was against their Lusts, either they did nothing, or would be sure to provoke thee with their inventions, I did but becken to them, and they flew to my Camp; nay, they were more impudent than I, believed less, than I, found out sins I did not dream of, durst do more than I bid them; I bid them deny a thing, they had done, and they not only denied it, but swore to it by all that's good, and holy; I bid them take their ease and be merry, and they made themselves Swine; I bid them neglect God's Service on the Lord's day, but they profaned it besides, by playing, and drinking, and other enormities; I bid them keep, what they had got, but they went beyond what I prompted them to, oppressed, cheated, dissembled, and made way to their Wealth through oppression of the Widow and Fatherless. These therefore have my Image and Subscription, and consequently must be mine. I claim them as mine own.

I challenge them as they are Apostates and Traitors to thee : It is thy Statute which like the Laws of *Medes* and *Persians* is irrevocable, that those shall be despised, who did lightly esteem thee. Nor can God be worse than his Word, but must deliver up the Sinner, whom no Mercy could reform, to these tormentors.

Nay, if we have oppressed any Persons, those very Persons will be Witnesses against us. *Abel* will in that Day bear witness against *Cain* his Murderer; *Naboth* against *Ahab*, whole Countreys against their Tyrannical Princes; *Israel* against *Pharaoh*; in the same manner, those whom we have corrupted with Gifts or Moneys, or some other way will stand up against us; *Herodias* against *Herod*; *Drusilla* against *Felix*; the Harlot against her *Inamorato*; *Helena* against *Paris*; *Danae* against *Jupiter*; and Men and Women perverted by Hereticks against the broachers of false Doctrines; and how can there be

want of Witnesses when our School-masters, our Parents, and other good Men, whose Counsels we rejected, whose Admonitions we despised, and whose frequent Exhortations we laughed at, will be forced to speak what they know against us. Sinner, The Ministers of the Gospel, those who follow'd thee with checks and intreaties to be reconciled to God, will be obliged to speak of thy stubbornness, and impenitence : Nay, this Pulpit, these Walls, these Stones, these Pews, will cry out against thee ! Hea-

ven and Earth are even in this  
*Ez. i. 3.* life call'd in as Witnesses against the Monsters, who were more inconsiderate than the Ox, or Ass; much more in that Day, when God will bring every thing into Judgment, not only the sinful actions, but the very places in which those actions were committed.

Such Witnesses will be the Riches and Goods, thou hast abused; the Gold thou hast spent upon thy Luxury

Luxury, the Silver, thou hast thrown away in a frolick, the Garments, thou hast abused to Pride, the Corn, and Bread thou hast play'd withal, the Hungry whom thou hast not fed, the Thirsty to whom thou hast not given Drink ; the naked, whom thou hast not clothed, when it lay in thy power ; the Prisoners whom thou hast not visited ; these will all be accusers of thy abuses, and uncharitableness. But the accusation of all these might yet be born with ; it's the Testimony of the Judge, who shall approve of all, that these Witnesses averr, which appears most dreadful, and terrible, and therefore certainly, the prospect of this Judgment is able to damp the greatest mirth, and sensuality.

And as this Judge will himself be Witness in that Day, so he will be his own Advocate too. To this purpose saith the Pathetick *Nazianzene*, What shall we do my Friends, what shall we say, what Apology shall we

make, when this Judge shall plead  
for himself in that Day ; Thou diso-  
bedient Wretch, I made thee of Clay  
with mine own Hands, and breathed  
the Breath of Life into thee ; I made  
thee after my Image, I gave thee Rea-  
son, and Understanding, and Power, and  
Dominion over the Beasts of the Field,  
a mercy which if I had not vouch-  
safed unto thee, those Creatures,  
which are stronger than thou, would  
have master'd & destroy'd thee ; I plac'd  
thee among the Pleasures of *Paradise*,  
made thee a happy Inhabitant of  
*Eden*, and when thou wouldest needs  
hearken to the false and treacherous  
suggestions of thy sworn Enemy, be-  
hold in pity and commiseration to  
thee, I resolved to be Born of a Vir-  
gin, and accordingly took Flesh,  
and became Man for thy sake, was  
Born in a Stable, lay unregarded in a  
Manger, swaddled in Rags and Clouts,  
endured all the reproaches and inju-  
ries, that Childhood is subject to,  
bore thy griefs, and assumed thy in-  
firmities,

firmities, and was made like thy self, that thou might be like me in Felicity at the end of thy Race, I suffered men to trample on me, to buffet me, to spit in my Face, to give me Gall, and Vinegar to drink, to Scourge me, to crown me with Thorns, to Wound, and Nail me to the Crofs, and all this, that I might deliver thee from Eternal contempt and torments. Behold the mark of the Nails which were struck into my Flesh. Behold my wounded side; I suffered, that thou might'st Triumph, I died, that thou might'st live, was buried, that thou might'st rise, and made my self a scorn of the People, that thou might'st reign in Heaven; and why would'st thou throw away this Mercy? Why would'st thou refuse this Treasure! What evil Spirit did possess thee to make light of these kindnesses? Why would'st thou pollute that Soul, which I redeemed with mine own Blood? Why wouldst thou make thy Heart a

habitation of Devils, which I intended for my Throne ? Why would'st thou lose that which I purchased at so dear a rate ? What pleasure couldst thou take in doing that which cost me so many sighs and tears, and a bloody sweat ; why would'st thou make a mock of so great a Mercy ! How could'st thou undervalue a Favour of that importance and consequence ? Can any Hell be thought too much for such stubbornness ? Either thou didst believe, that thy God did all this for thee, or thou didst not : If thou didst not believe it, why didst thou make confession of it with thy Mouth ? If thou didst, how couldst thou be so ungrateful ? How could'st thou abuse a Friendship of that worth and value ? Thou lovest a Friend, a Neighbour, a Man, a Woman for kindnesses, which are meer shadows, and bubbles to my love, and hadst not thou reason to love me beyond all earthly comforts ? Hadst not thou reason to prefer my Favour before the smiles of

a transitory VWorld ? How did I deserve such preposterous doings at thy Hands ? Couldst thou have dealt worse with a Slave, or with an Enemy, than thou hast done with me ? Did this condescension deserve, dost thou think, such affronts, and injuries, such contempt, and disobedience, as thou hast returned to me ? Therefore as for those mine Enemies, which would not have this Man to Reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.

All this appears in the prospect of a future Judgment, and therefore there must be Vertue in it, to check that mirth and jollity, which infatuates Souls, and leads them into ruine.

4. In the prospect of this future Judgment, there appears the unspeakable anguish and misery of those who have been most jolly, and merry in this life. *Dives*, who cloth'd himself in Purple, and fine Linnen, and fared sumptuously every day, appears there quaking, and

trembling, & crying, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his Finger in Water, and cool my Tongue; his Tables which were over-laid with Silver, his richer Beds, his Tapestry, his Ornaments, his Ointments, his Balsams, his Cordials, his delicate Wines, his various Dishes, his Cooks, his Flatterers, his Parasites, his Retinue, his Servants, and all the Nonsense, and Pomp that attended him, are not only extinct, and turned into Ashes, and Dust, and Dirt, but his naked Soul is dragg'd & carried before a tremendous Majesty, to endure intolerable torments, and before this terrible God he appears with his Eyes cast down, blushing, and ashamed, trembling, and fearful, and all his former comforts seem to have been but dreams to him.

See how the Scene is changed; he to whom the poor Man formerly supplicated for relief, now is forced to supplicate to the poor Man to be reliev'd  
of

of him, and would be glad of *Lazarus's* Table, who once scorn'd to let *Lazarus* gather the Crums that fell from his ; when *Lazarus* was near him, he slighted him; now he is afar off, he adores him, and himself now is the poor Man, while *Lazarus* swims in Riches; such a discovery doth that last Day make, who laughs the Rich, and who the Poor, who the Wife, and who the Fools.

In this judgment, *Nimrod*, *Sennacherib*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belsazar*, *Tiberius*, *Nero*, *Domitian*; men who would be thought Gods, and denied themselves in no pleasure, their Fancies eraved; stand all ashamed, and confounded, flames of a guilty Conscience burning in their Breasts, and forcing their voices into bitter lamentations; there *Sardanapalus*, *Crœsus*, *Cambyses*, *Herod*, and all the Mighty men that spared no Woman in their Lust, and no Man in their Anger, appear all like guilty Malefactors, their Hearts failing

ling them for fear , and they chattering like a Crane, and mourning like a Dove, and bewailing their airy, short , and transitory satisfactions , and cursing the Hour, and the Minute when the first temptations courted them to those dangerous embraces ; there Cleopatra, that sailed in a Vessel glistening with Gold, a Vessel fitted for Pride, and Luxury, and magnificence, and tried how far Sensuality might be improved, and to what height bruitish pleasure might be advanced ; there the wretched Woman is seen not so much with Serpents clasping about her Breast, as with a Worm within, that dies not, tormenting her awaken'd Conscience with shapes of Death, and Images of Ruine, and all the Beasts , that here could not be satisfied with pleasure, there cannot be eased of gnawing Vultures, and Agonies, for these the Just God must at last inflict , to make them sensible that his threatenings were no Fables, and to let them see, that the ad-

advices of wise men, and Philosophers, who exhorted them to the study of Virtue, were grounded on rational Foundations.

These tortures, and vexations must not expire till the Ancient of Days, who was affronted by their sins, doth die, and that's never, he being the same yesterday, to day, and for ever: Thus their sweet Meat must have four Sauce, and if they will have their pleasures, they must feel the sting too, that's inseparably affix'd to them. The Bait cannot be swallow'd without the Hook, and as pleasant as the Honey is, the Gally which is part of it, must be tasted too. God will not be always mock'd, and they, that durst in despight of his will and prohibitions feed upon that luscious Fruit, shall feel the smart of the prickles too.

In this judgment their postures, gestures, and behaviour, and deportment appear in another Figure, and they that before laugh'd at the Thunders

ders of the Law, made light of the  
 threatenings of the Gospel, and let  
 the warnings of the Ministers of the  
 Gospel go in at one Ear, and out at  
 another, now call themselves Fools  
 and Sots for doing so, and they that  
 before thought of no after recko-  
 ning, now fall a wishing, but in vain ;  
 O that I had been wise ! O that I  
 had bethought my self ! O that I  
 had look'd beyond this World ! O  
 that I had believed ! O that I had  
 retired, and considered, what these  
 satisfactions would end in ! Fool that  
 I was, to think, that God would  
 prove a Lyar ! Where was my Rea-  
 son to think, that all that the wisest,  
 and holiest Men have said, were but  
 Dreams and idle Tales ! I that might  
 have been a terror to Devils, how  
 am I become their scorn ! I that  
 might have been a Favourite of God,  
 how am I become his Enemy ! I that  
 might have triumph'd with other  
 Saints, how am I fall'n from their  
 bliss ! O what would not I give to  
 be

be rid of the torment, I feel ! Help ,  
help, ye Souls, that have any pity  
in you : I sink under the weight of  
my former pleasures! They are loath-  
some to me ! They appear Monsters,  
Furies, hideous things to me ! Curs-  
ed be that Lust, I cherished ! Cursed  
be that Bed, on which my wicked-  
ness was wrought ! O that my Tongue  
had dropt out of my Head, when  
I pleased my self with lascivious dis-  
courses ! O that I had been deaf,  
when I was tickled with hearing a  
smutty jest ! O that I had been struck  
blind, when with joy and satisfacti-  
on I beheld that charming beauty !  
O that my Feet had failed me, when  
I was going into that Jovial Compa-  
ny ! O that I had lock'd my self up,  
that I might not have seen those  
temptations which enticed me ! O  
that I had spent those Hours, I threw  
away in carding and dicing , and  
drinking, and revelling ! O that I had  
spent them in holy Contemplations  
of the Vanity of these sublunary Ob-  
jects !

jects! Now I would do it, and it is too late! Now I would repent, and it profits me not! Now I would be serious, and it signifies nothing! My time is lost! The day of Grace is gone! The opportunities are past: O that I could tear out this Heart! O that I could pull out these Eyes! O that I could dispatch my self! O that I had a Sword, that I might put a period to this miserable condition! I see nothing, but ruine before me, nothing but darkness, nothing but confusion, nothing but horrours, and no Creature will help me to annihilate my self! I am not able to endure this torture for a moment, how shall I be able to endure it to infinite Millions of Ages! I see no end of it, the farther I look, the more of my misery I see! Where-ever I cast my Eyes, I see nothing, but Terrour, Devils, and miserable Souls in the same condition with my self, all howling about my Ears! A thing so far from affording comfort, that it

fills

fills me with greater horrour ! Whe-  
 ther shall I flee for remedy ! Heaven  
 is shut up ! There is a vast Gulph  
 betwixt me, and that ; there is no  
 passing from hence thither, nor from  
 thence to this dolef ul place ! I swim  
 in a Sea of Sorrow, I swim, and see  
 no shore, I labour, and not a Plank  
 appears on which I may save my life,  
 here are no Hills, no Mountains, no  
 Rocks, I can cry too, and if there  
 were, they are all deaf ! God hath  
 forsaken me, and good reason, for I  
 left him for a Lust, and undervalued  
 him for Trifles ? I pleaded, I could  
 not withstand the Charms, the World  
 offered to me ! Mad Man ! I could  
 withstand them now, why could not I  
 have withstood them then ? I might  
 have considered of this place, and of  
 this state, and of these vexations,  
 and check'd my self : O that I were  
 but to live again in the World ! O that  
 God would but try me again ! How  
 would I scorn the very thoughts of  
 Mirth, and raillery ! How would I  
 run

run away from the very mention of  
 these Impostures ! Break my Heart ,  
 Break ! If God will not kill thee, call  
 upon the infernal Spirits, and see what  
 they will do ! But Oh they delight in  
 their groans ! Themselves lie under  
 the same Condemnation , banish'd  
 from the gracious presence of God !  
 They would die, as well, as I, if they  
 were able ! O what a torment is it !  
 I see the everlasting Joys before me,  
 and cannot reach them ! They are  
 over my Head, and I cannot come  
 near them ! Paradise I see, but can-  
 not enter into it ! I knock my Head,  
 I smite my Breast, I stamp with my  
 Feet, but am never the better ! That  
 Jesus, on whose Blood I trampled, I  
 see rejoicing with his followers at the  
 Right hand of God, and not a drop  
 of comfort drops from his Lips, on  
 mine ! I feel Flames within, which  
 no Waters can quench, a drop of Wa-  
 ter would be some refreshment, and  
 give me some hopes of ease, but here is  
 none : All the Rivers of Consola-  
 tion

tion are dried up to me! I walk in darkness! I see no light! O God, tear the Heavens and come down! Canst thou hear these shrieks, and be unconcern'd! Canst thou see this poor Creature lie in torments, and give no relief! Hast thou no mercy left! O then my state is desperate! I shall not be able to refrain from Blasphemy! For I see none can help, but thou, and thou wilt not! I rave, I am distracted with fear! I tremble! I quake! stand off Devils! I have Furies enough within! Ye damned Pleasures, whither have you brought me! Ye have made me lose the favour of him, who alone is able to give me ease! I might have been happy, if it had not been for you, I might have escaped these Regions of anguish, if you had not tempted me! But why do I accuse you! This brutish Heart of mine was in the fault; my devilish Lust hurried me into ruine; I had reason, and would not use it, means of Grace, and would

not apply them, offers of Mercy,  
and would not accept of them ; O all  
ye, that pass by, behold and see, if  
there be any sorrow like unto my sor-  
row, which is done unto me, where-  
with the Lord hath afflicted me, in  
the Day of his fierce anger, from  
Lam. 1.12.  
13. 14.  
above he hath sent a Fire in-  
to my Bones, and it prevails  
against them, he hath spread  
a Net for my feet, he hath turned me  
back; he hath made me desolate, and  
faint all the Day, the Took of my  
transgressions is bound by his hand,  
they are wreath'd, and come up upon  
my Neck, he hath made my strength to  
fall, the Lord hath deliver'd me in-  
to their bands from whom I am not  
able to rise up.

All this certainly appears in the  
prospect of that future Judgment,  
and consequently is enough to check,  
and damp the greatest Jollities on  
this side Hell, and though it's true,  
that it doth not cause the least distur-  
bance in thousands of men, that  
drink

drink of these stolen Waters, for men in this Age are as jovial, as ever, and a judgment to come frights them no more, than a House on fire a Thousand Miles off; but sure this is for want of taking the proper way and method, which God, and Reason doth prescribe, and what that way, and method is, shall be shewn in the following Paragraph.

3. How the prospect of that future Judgment must be managed, that it may actually damp, and put a stop to these carnal delights.

This is to be done, no other way,  
but,

i. By thinking, reflecting, and ruminating upon that future Judgment. This stands to Reason, for except things be made visible to us, how shall they move or fright us? This future Judgment being out of sight, and afar off, it must be brought near, and set before us; and there is no

way to do it, but by thinking. Our thoughts are the Picture-Drawers, which make the Landskip of that judgment so lively, that our faculties can not but be signally affected with it. These are the Divine part within us, which can make things past, and future, as present, and summon the remotest Objects to become familiar and palpable. These are the Glasses in which all that God hath said, or promised, and threatned, becomes visible, and with the help of these we may make that substance, which seemed but Air before, and condense that into solid Notions, which to a carnal Man seemed but Fancy and Wind before. These can make us in a manner grasp and feel that which was out of our reach before, and make us concern'd about things which we neither see, nor hear, nor feel with our grosser Organs. These can transplant the other World into this, and make Eternity appear before us, though we live in Tabernacles

cles of Clay ; to prove this, we need only appeal to experience. Behold those pious Souls, that take a course contrary to that of the World ; what makes them afraid of sinning ? What makes them afraid of running with their Neighbours into Riot ? What makes them, that they dare not do, what some of their carnal acquaintance and Relations do ? What makes them mourn ? What makes them rejoice in Spirit ; You see nothing, that they have reason to mourn for ? They have a competency, they want nothing in the World, they have necessaries and conveniences, and they prosper in their lawful undertakings ; and under some of their greatest afflictions, you see nothing that should make them cheerful, no outward cause of their joy, but rather all that is about them is an invitation to sorrow and dejection : Why ? They are invisible things, that make them mourn and rejoice, and by thinking of them, they make them visible, and

so visible, that they are affected with them as much, as other men are with Objects that incur into their Senses; by thinking they see the Terrors of the Lord, and the Affronts they have offered to the Divine Majesty, and the wounds they have given to their own Souls, and that makes them weep; by thinking, they see the Glory, that is set before them, and the recompence which is promised them, and the right, and title they have to it, and that makes their Souls rejoice; so then by thinking, this future Judgment may be seen, and if it be seen in any lively colours, there is no sinner so stout, no Man so perverse, no creature so dull, and stupid, but it will startle him, and put Wormwood into his Cup. *When I eat, or drink, or whatever I do, the last Trump sounds in mine Ears, and I think I hear the terrible Voice of the Arch-angel, Arise ye dead, and come to Judgment,* saith St. Hierome: These thoughts made him eat, & drink with great

great moderation : These brought a Holy fear upon him in all his actions : These kept him from going beyond the bounds, God had set him : These struck seriousness into him in all places : These made him as circumspect in the Market-place, as if he had been at Church, and as devout in the Street, as if he had stood at the high Altar. And therefore I do not wonder at that *Hermit* that he became so serious a Man as Antiquity reports him, who carried a little Book about him, consisting only of four Leaves in which he was always seen reading, and after reading, meditating ; in the first leaf was express'd *Christ's* passion, and what that darling of Mankind suffered for poor Mortals, during his abode in the World ; in the second, was represented the process of the future Judgment, with the Terrors, and Constructions, that guilty men will be in at that time ; in the third were described the Glories of Paradise, and

of that third Heaven, which all Holy Souls shall enter into, there to possess the Inheritance of the Saints in light ; in the Fourth was drawn to the life, the Picture of Hell, and of the Miseries, which shall await the stubborn, and impenitent in the next life; these four Leaves were soon read over, but they afforded infinite matter for thoughts, and meditations, and by these his Soul was so warmed, that he cared not what became of him here, so he might but enjoy the promis'd Glory & that Life, & Immortality, Christ, had brought to light by the Gospel.

So true is that saying  
Chrysost. Homil. 2. in 2 Theſſalon. of St. Chrysostom ; There is no Man that thinks

much of Hell, that will ever fall into it, as indeed there is no Man, who makes light of it, that will ever escape it. For as it is among men, they that are afraid of the Penalties of the Law, seldom or never feel them, for their fear makes them shun those actions, which deserve

serve them : This keeps them from Theft and Rapine, from Murder, and Adultery, from Burglary, and Wrong, from Violence, and Oppression, and consequently from the punishments, the Law inflicts in such cases : The Plagues and the Stripes they fear, make them cautious, and whatever their inclination may be, the Rods, and Axes they fear, restrain them, whereas those that are regardless of the Mulet bring it upon themselves ; so it is here, the frequent thinking of it, is the best Antidote against the Terrors of that future Judgment ; if the *Ninivites* had not feared their overthrow, they had certainly been overthrown, and how could they have feared it, if they had not thought of it ? If the men, that lived before the Flood, had thought of it, and been afraid, they would not have been drown'd ; nor would the People of *Sodom* have been consum'd by Fire, if they had taken this course : It's a great misfortune not to think

think of the fulfilling of Gods threatenings, for he that thinks not of it, of all men, will be the first, that shall have woful experience of it.

It is reported of *Agatho*, that in his last sickness falling into a Trance, for three Days together, he lay with his Eyes fix'd upon Heaven, and all that time look'd very ghastly ; recovering out of the extasy, and being ask'd by his Friends, where he had been, and what his thoughts had been during those three Days, and what made him look so strangely ? O my friends, said he, do you ask me, Where I have been ? alas ! I have been these three Days standing before the great Tribunal, and seen how the most just Judge sentenced divers Souls to Eternal darkness, and who would not stand amazed at the dreadful spectacle ? It was therefore a very good Prayer of St. *Ambrose* : 'I do most vehemently desire, O Lord, that thou wouldest be pleased to imprint and very deeply imprint the  
 'Landskip

' Landskip of the future World, the  
 ' Miseries of the Disobedient, the  
 ' Groans of the Stubborn, the Ago-  
 ' nies of the Impenitent, the Shrieks  
 ' of the Profane, the Vexations of  
 ' Hypocrites, the Fears of the Care-  
 ' less, the Destruction of the Co-  
 ' vetous, the Perdition of Worldlings,  
 ' the Flames of the Revengeful, the  
 ' Terrour of Damnation, and E-  
 ' ternal Torments, and the future  
 ' Felicity of thy Kingdom, upon my  
 ' Mind, for it is impossible that he  
 ' that thinks much of these things,  
 ' should not become thy Child, and  
 ' Servant, and one of those, whom thou  
 ' hast predestinated to Eternal Life.

Do'st thou laugh , said the Old  
 Man in *Ruffinus* to a youngster  
 (whose behaviour was very light)  
 when you and I are to be judged be-  
 fore Heaven and Earth, and indeed  
 that Person, that surveys, what the  
 Divine Jesus hath said of this fu-  
 ture Judgment, thinks how in that  
 Day the Powers of Heaven will be  
 shaken,

shaken, the Sun turned into Darkness  
the Moon into Blood, and the Stars  
forbear to give their Light, how the  
World, and all the Elements will be  
on Fire, the Universe melt like Wax,  
the Earth be burnt up, the Seas  
dried, and the Rivers consumed, and  
with what Glory and Bravery the  
once afflicted Son of God will then  
appear, with an Army of Angels  
about him displaying their Banners,  
and carrying the Sign of the Son of  
Man before him; how before him  
all Nations will be assembled and all  
that are in their Graves, upon hear-  
ing the Voice of God, loud as Thun-  
der, and more dreadful too, will be  
summon'd to appear before his Bar,  
the Judge shining in his Meridian  
Glory, brighter than *Moses*, clearer  
than the Sun, and how the Conscien-  
ces of Guilty men will quake at this  
sight, their Hearts misgiving them,  
that their Portion will be in outward  
Darkness, how formidable all the  
transactions will be, how immuta-  
ble

ble the Sentence, after it is once passed, not to be altered, or deprecated by Saints, or Angels, how all evasions, and subterfuges will be out of doors there, and all possibility of transferring our Errours upon others who have been partners with us in our sins, will vanish, how those that make themselves fools for Christ's sake in this life, were reproached, reviled, derided, and laughed at for their severities, would not lose their Souls for a trifle, nor sell their Birth-right to Eternal Bliss for a Morsel of Meat, would held fast their Integrity, though solicited by innumerable losses, and crosses, and by their nearest Relations to curse God, and die, how these who were here made the off-scourings of all things, will then be absolved, and quitted, and have Seats appointed them in the Mansions of Glory, there to reign, and sing the goodness of God to all Eternity. I say, he that seriously surveys these things, if he be a Person  
who

who hath not debauch'd or lost his reason, cannot but be affected by passages of this Nature, and think it time to curb himself in his sensual delights, and satisfactions. But,

2. Bare thinking is not enough, but the particulars of this future Judgment must be actually applied to our selves; general things, and what is done to others though they may touch the Heart, yet do not subdue it till particular applications give them force, and power. A Fire, that is a Mile off from me, though it causes in me some sense of the calamity, yet if it threatens the House I live in, my Faculties soon bestir themselves, and I fall to work, and secure my self in good earnest; so here when I behold the tremendous process of this Judgment, I must reflect, that as God deals with others, so he will certainly deal with me, that I have no greater priviledge than others, but must stand, and fall by the same Law, that they stand, and fall

fall by, that to fancy any more favourable proceedings towards me, than God intends to others, is but a dream and contrary to the impartiality of the Judge ; that as I have a Soul to be saved as well as my Neighbour, so God will expect I should live here, as he bids my Neighbour live, that neither my Estate, nor Dignity, neither my Offices, nor Friends, neither my Riches, nor my Greatness will excuse my living more carelessly than my poorer Friends, nay, that my outward advantages make my account greater, and as I have had greater Talents bestow'd upon me, so more will be required of me than of them who have not had those opportunities of being good, and holy, which I have had ; that as God hath advanced me in the World, placed me in a higher station, given me a considerable figure here on Earth, made his Candle to shine upon me, caused my Root to spread out by the Waters, and the Dew of Heaven

ven to lie all Night upon my Branch,  
and afforded me credit, and respect  
among men, so he looks for greater  
fruitfulness in good Works, and more  
than ordinary exemplariness to ad-  
vance his Glory, and to spread the  
Power of Religion among my infe-  
riours, and dependants; and there-  
fore upon a View of this future pro-  
cess, I must needs rouze my Soul, by  
such Questions as these ;

If God be resolved to judge the se-  
crets of mens Hearts according to his  
Gospel, what will become of me ?  
Should God call thee to Judgment  
O my Soul, this Night, or this Hour,  
art thou in a condition to appear be-  
fore so great, so dreadful a God ?  
Is this foolery thou pleasest thy  
self with, this wanton dress, this  
jolly life, these merry Hours, this  
gaming, this carousing, this extra-  
vagant laughter, this fondness of the  
humour of the Age, this immodest,  
and frothy talk, this foolish garb,  
this phantastick fashion, this mispen-  
ding

ding thy time, this keeping of vain Company, this unprofitable way of living, this thy being intent altogether upon the profits and pleasures of the World, this indifference in Religion, these faint resistances of Temptations, this neglect of known Duties, this unfaithful discharge of the Duties of thy Relations, this unwillingness to mind any thing that's serious, this aversion from Spiritual Discourses, and Actions, this want of Gravity, &c. Are these fit wedding Garments to come before the King of Heaven in? Thou maist be summon'd to come to his Bar within this Day or two; think what an infinite Majesty thou must be presented to! Should God speak the word within a few Minutes, *Come away, come away, and give an account of thy behaviour*; how unprepared art thou? So great is thy danger, and canst thou loiter? So near art thou to a tremendous Eternity, and Oh wilt not thou be clean? Thou standest

H upon

upon the brink of Hell, and wilt not thou step back, thou art within a Bows shot of the great Tribunal, & doth not thy Countenance change? Thou art within hearing of the Thunders, that come forth from the Throne of God, and do not thy Thoughts trouble thee? Thou seest the fatal Hand upon the Wall, and do not thy Knees smite one against another? Thou must shortly appear before all the Host of Heaven, and art not thou got farther yet in Holiness? Do'st not thou quake, to think, that the Revenger of Blood is upon thy Heels?

As thou art a Christian, thou art a Son of God, and do'st thou express that filial disposition in thy gate, and looks, and face, and Life? Art thou born of God, and canst thou degenerate from his Nature? Art thou made after his Image, and by Grace renew'd after his similitude, and canst thou be contented, under a temper so different from that Holiness, which is thy great Fathers Perfection, and Glory?

Glory? Does God expect thee at his Tribunal with the qualifications of a Child, and wilt thou appear before him as a Rebel? Hath he given his Son on purpose to adopt thee, and thinkest thou to present thy self before him in the shape of a Prodigal? Thou art designed for a Citizen of the Celestial *Jerusalem*, and wilt thou appear before him as an Inhabitant of Hell? Thou art one of God's Family, and wilt thou appear before him, as a Traitor? Thou art purchased by his Blood, and wilt thou live, as if that Blood had been spilt in vain? Thou art wash'd in the Laver of Regeneration, and canst thou wallow with the Swine in the Mire? Thou hast known the way of Righteousness, and wilt thou with the Dog return to the Vomit? Or art thou not afraid of that saying, that Dogs must stand without?

Rev. 22.  
15.

Thou art call'd to be faithful, and hast given thy Faith to God; wilt thou

H 2 break

break thy Faith, and hope to be guiltless at this Bar? Will not God revenge this breach, or canst thou think, he will let thee go unpunish'd for thy Treacheries? How canst thou expect the performance of his Promises, while thou art so false to thy engagements? Thou hast vow'd thy self to him both in Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord, and canst thou imagine, that thy Perjuries will not be remembred, when thou comest to look the Judge in the Face? By giving thee opportunity of becoming a Christian, God hath made thee a King, and wilt thou run to the Bramble, and say, **Come thou and Reign over me?** As a King, thou hast power given thee to vanquish Flesh and Blood, to tread upon Lions and Adders, to desie Principalities, and Powers, and to crush Devils, and wilt thou make thy self a Slave to those Enemies, over which God hath given thee power to trample them under thy Feet? As

a King thou art to appear before him, and wilt thou come in the posture of a miserable Vassal ? Shall those Passions rule over thee, which thy God hath given thee for Servants, and Handmaids ? And what a dismal sight will it be, when thou art to come before the Throne laden with Conquests, to appear fetter'd with Chains, and the Devils Trophies ? God designs thee to be his Priest ; This is one of the Priviledges, that came by the Blood of Christ : But where are thy Sacrifices ? the Sacrifice of fervent Prayer, the Sacrifice of an humble contrite Heart, the Sacrifice of Praise, and delight in God ? And wilt thou come without the Mark of thy Office before the great Shepherd, and Bishop of Souls ? Thou art enlightned by the Spirit of God, and dost thou think to live in Darkness, and after all to share in the boundless Inheritance with the Children of Light ? How unlike thy self wilt thou appear before God, if thou

come without these qualifications ? Thou art a Christian, but where is the Life of Christ that should be in thee ? Will the Judge ever take thee for his Sheep, when it's evident, thou do'st not hear his Voice ? How ridiculous is that Man, that hangs out a Bush, and yet hath no Wine to sell ? And how foolish is that *Apothecary*, that writes glorious Names upon his Pots, when the rich drugs that are named, have no being in his Shop ? And will it not tend to thy everlasting confusion that thou hast had the Name of a Christian, and done nothing like a Christian ?

Thus the particular proceedings of that future judgment must be applied to our selves , if we resolve that the prospect of a future Judgment shall damp our carnal delights, and satisfactions, and without using this method, we do but trifle, and talk of breeding Mountains, and bring forth ridiculous Mice, play with Religion, and are not in good earnest, when we say,

say, we believe a future account.

3. But neither the Reflections aforesaid, nor the Application we have spoken of, will make any deep impression, except all be seconded with earnest Prayer, that God by his holy Spirit working in our Minds, would make the attempt effectual; this must set to its Seal, drive in the Nail, and clench it. The Eternal Spirit must give success to these enterprizes, and in vain do we plant or water, except he gives the increase. He is that anointing, which must supple the Soul, and Crown all with Laurels and Victory. By strength of thought, and application, the Fort of sin may be assaulted, but without this Spirit lends his helping Hand, it will never be taken, or subdued. His Power must overcome the Oppositions, our Flesh and the World will certainly make in this case, and if he blows upon our Hearts, the strong Holds of Iniquity, like the Walls of *Jericho* will fall, and no-

thing can stand before him, and he will certainly come in to our assistance, if our Prayer, and Addresses be fervent and importunate. Upon such Devotions, the frequent Discourses of this Day of Judgment, we read or hear, will be so far from bringing the thing into contempt with our Souls, that our Hearts will be awaken'd more, and it's impossible, we can miscarry in the pious design, if with strong cries, we apply our selves to him, who hath appointed a Day, in the which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man, whom he hath ordain'd, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the Dead, *Act. 17. 31.*

That which we are chiefly to insist upon in these Addresses is, that we may get lively apprehensions of that Day, and such apprehensions, as no pleasure, no folly, no temptation of the World may darken, or destroy; and here let the Soul break forth into such Ejaculations:

‘ Q

' O God, Great, and Glorious, make  
 ' me deeply sensible of that Day, and  
 ' of that Hour, when the Son of Man  
 ' will come, when the Goats shall be  
 ' separated from the Sheep, the Tares  
 ' from the Wheat, the Good from the  
 ' Bad ; when neither Prayers, nor  
 ' Tears shall be able to deliver the  
 ' guilty and polluted Soul from the  
 ' impendent danger ; when it shall be  
 ' laid to the humble, *Friend fit up high-*  
 ' *er, & to the proud Fool, Give place to*  
 ' *him, that's more Honourable, than thou*  
 ' *art;* when the Book of Conscience shall  
 ' be open'd, and the Dead Judged by the  
 ' contents of that Book ; when the Sin-  
 ' ner will not know where to flee,  
 ' and his Spirits will fail him for  
 ' fear of him, that sits upon the  
 ' Throne.

' O God ! Fix these considerations  
 ' in my Soul ; strengthen my Faith,  
 ' that I may believe these things un-  
 ' seen without wavering. How apt  
 ' is the World to get between this tre-  
 ' mendous Day, and my sight ! Quicken  
 ' thou

'thou mine Eyes , that I may see  
 'through all impediments into that  
 'process, and reflect, what manner of  
 'Person I ought to be in all Holy con-  
 'versation, and Godliness ! Lord Jesu !  
 'Great Judge of the World ! Let the  
 'Lines of that Judgment be written so  
 'legibly in my Mind, that my Soul  
 'may delight to read them, that no-  
 'thing may divert me from studying,  
 'and considering them ; let this be my  
 'chief study, and let me feel the same  
 'effect, that those men did, who were  
 'converted at thy Apostles Sermon ;  
 'let me be prickt at the Heart, and  
 'cry out, What must I do to be saved?  
 'Let the thoughts of this Day make a  
 'Reformation in my outward, and in-  
 'ward Man, that it may appear, that  
 'thou hast touch'd me with a Coal  
 'from the altar. O God to whom  
 'Vengeance belongs, shew thy self,  
 'and disperse my foolish desires.  
 'Let my Soul feel the transactions of  
 'that day as well as believe them.  
 'Clear my Understanding and en-  
 lighten

' lighten my Mind, that I may have a  
 ' livelier prospect of it. I will not let  
 ' thee go except thou bless me: Look  
 ' down from the Habitation of thy  
 ' Holiness, and visit my Soul. Expel  
 ' the prejudices I have against severity  
 ' of Life, and with the Thoughts of  
 ' this Day destroy them utterly. Let  
 ' the consideration of this Day so work  
 ' upon me, that my Ambition, Co-  
 ' vetousness, Pride, and Anger may  
 ' tremble at the sight, and leave their  
 ' Habitation, and may be ever afraid  
 ' of returning. Oh tell me, that this  
 ' Day will certainly come, and that  
 ' the Day of my Death, will be the  
 ' Emblem of it. Oh assure me of the  
 ' Terrore of that Day, that shall burn  
 ' like an Oven wherein all that do  
 ' wickedly shall be Stubble, and the  
 ' Fire shall burn them up, that it shall  
 ' leave them neither Root nor Branch;  
 ' let me not take example by the care-  
 ' less World, that put this evil Day  
 ' far from them. Let it be always be-  
 ' fore me ! Let my Mind be never free  
 ' from the contemplations of it. Let

' it

' it mingle with my Busines, with my  
 ' Meals, with my Converse, with my  
 ' Sleep, and with all my Undertakings.  
 ' In every sin I am tempted to, let it  
 ' frighten me, in my going out, and  
 ' in my coming in, let it continually  
 ' beat upon my Mind. Oh my Lord! let  
 ' me muse upon this Day of Retributi-  
 ' on; this Day of Recompence, this  
 ' Day of Trouble, this Day of Ter-  
 ' rour, this Day of Joy, this Day of  
 ' Comfort; this Day wherein thy Pro-  
 ' mises, and Threatnings, will be ful-  
 ' fill'd; this Day, which must decide  
 ' the controversy of my Life, and  
 ' Death; this Day which will bring to  
 ' light all hidden things; this Day,  
 ' which will revive the good, and con-  
 ' found the bad; this Day of Consola-  
 ' tion; this Day of Consternation, let  
 ' me ruminate upon it, till thoughts  
 ' of this Judgment prevail with me  
 ' to become a new Creature; thy  
 ' Grace must melt my stubborn Heart;  
 ' without thee I can do nothing. O  
 ' relieve me! O come in with the  
 ' light of thy Countenance! Stir up  
     ' my

'my Soul, and rouze it from its carelessness! Call to me as thou didst to thy  
 'People of Old ; let that Voice sound  
 'in my Ears, *The great Day of*  
Zephan. 1. *the Lord is near, it is near,*  
14, 15, 16, *hasteth greatly, even the Voice*  
17, 18. *of the Day of the Lord; the mighty Man*  
 'shall cry bitterly ; that Day is a Day  
 'of Wrath, a Day of Trouble, and Di-  
 'stress, a Day of Wasteness, and Deso-  
 'lation, a Day of Darkness and Gloom-  
 'iness, a Day of Clouds, and thick  
 'Darkness, a Day of the Trumpet, and  
 'Alarm against the fenced Cities, and  
 'against the high Towers, and I will  
 'bring Distress upon men, that they  
 'shall walk, like Blind Men, because  
 'they have sinned against the Lord,  
 'and their Blood shall be poured out,  
 'as Dust, and their Flesh, as the Dung,  
 'neither their Silver, nor their Gold  
 'shall be able to deliver them in the  
 'Day of the Lord's Wrath.

'O let me not lose the sense of this  
 'Day! Oh let me consider, how much  
 'better it is to be humble and con-  
     'temptible,

'temptible, and to hunger, and thirst,  
'and to suffer here, and afterwards to  
'enter into my Great Masters Joy,  
'than to be a Slave to my Lusts, and  
'Pleasures here, and to be bound at last  
'with everlasting Chains of Dark-  
'ness, Chains which never wear out,  
'Chains which always bind, are al-  
'ways grievous, always painful; Oh  
'let me consider, how much better it  
'is to Mourn here, and to Water  
'my Couch with my Tears, and to  
'Afflict my Soul, and after this, to  
'triumph with the Spirits of men  
'made Perfect, than to feed upon  
'Pleasures, which at the best are but  
'like the crackling of Thorns under a  
'Pot, and then to be sent away, to  
'howl with Devils: Help Lord, help,  
'that my Soul may be concern'd at her  
'danger, and despise the World, and  
'prepare against that Day, and en-  
'counter with Powers, and Principa-  
'lities, and Spiritual wickednesses in  
'High-places; if by any means I  
'might attain unto the Resurrection  
'of the Dead. Such

Such Prayers offered from a Heart, that hath no reserves, from a Heart, resolved to do any thing rather than miss of Salvation ; such Prayers, I say, if they express the very desires of our Souls, will certainly put Death and Paleness into our sensual Pleasures, and oblige us to entertain other Thoughts of the Gauds, and Gaieties of the World, than now we have, and make us sensible, that this casting such a damp on the foolish satisfactions of the Flesh with a prospect of that Day, is not only a task fit for Hermits, and Melancholic Scholars, and contemplative men, but a duty incumbent on all, that carry immortal Souls in their Breasts, which calls me to the fourth Point.

4. Whether every Man is bound to embitter his Carnal delights with this prospect ?

To this I must answer in the Affirmative. For though the young Man be particularly mention'd here, yet since

since the expression in the Text reaches all men, who are fit for action, all such must necessarily fall under the Obligation of this duty, and all that are capable of such delights, are bound to make use of the aforesaid consideration, in order to this self-denial ; if the young Man is obliged to this seriousness, much more Older men ; if God will not allow of these delights in Youth, they must necessarily be intolerable in Years of greater Maturity ; and if the tender Age be concerned to embitter them with this prospect, when it meets with any temptation to them ; without all peradventure the stronger cannot be excused. And the Reasons are these following :

1. If they be not embitter'd with such Thoughts as these, they will infallibly lead the Soul into innumerable dangers, & there is no Man, but is obliged to preserve his Soul from danger : It is said of the Prodigal, *Luk. 15. 13.* *That he took his Journey into a far Coun-*

Country ; these sensual Pleasures alienated his Soul from God drove it away far from him, made him travel as far as Hell ; the Truth is, the Soul is lost in such sensual Pleasures, they wear out the bright Notions, the Soul had of God, and Religion ; as it is said of the *Sicilian Dogs* that running through the sweet, and floury, Fields, they lose their Scent in hunting ; so the Soul, where these pleasures, these white Devils become her Familiars, loses the Noble apprehensions, it once had of God's Omnipotence, and Omnipresence, of his Holiness, and Goodness, and of the Truth of his Promises, and Threatnings ; and these Characters like Letters written with bad Ink, vanish, and consequently the Life of the Soul ; for which reason the Prodigal, who drowned himself in these delights, is said to be dead, v. 32. These choak the good Seed that's sown in the noble Ground, and as you have seen a Field of Wheat, where the red

Poppies spring up as fast, as the richer Grain, though the proud Flowers are pleasing to the Eye, yet they retard and hinder the growth of the more useful Blade, and suck away the moisture that should have fed the other; so sensual delights where they are taken in as Partners, and suffered to grow in the Soul, in which some Fruits of the Spirit do appear, in a short time blast those excellent Fruits, the Effects of the Holy Ghost, or Education, or the Ministry of the Word, and prove Bryars and Thorns, which will not suffer any of the better Corn to grow under them.

Man's Soul and Body, are like two Buckets, while the one comes up full, the other goes down empty; Carnal delights advance the bruitish or fleshly part, make it grow strong, lusty, and vigorous, whereby it wrests the Scepter out of the Hand of Reason, and the Soul loses her strength, and power, and Sagacity in Spiritual things, grows weak, and faint,

faint, and at last expires and dies, I mean the virtuous Principles, which either kind Nature, or kinder Grace, or Afflictions, or some other means, and Instruments have incorporated with the Soul, which indeed are the life of that excellent Creature; and the Soul being thus dead, it falls a Prey to Devils, who rejoice over so great a Prey, and lead it in Triumph, take it Prisoner, and make it draw in their Victorious Chariot; and now all the Curses of the Law are in force against it, the threatenings of the Gospel become her Portion, and there is nothing left to stand betwixt her, and Eternal grief and anguish, but the slender Thred of this Mortal Life, which if it chance to break, or tear, the Soul sinks irrecoverably into the Gulph of Perdition, from whence there is no returning; so fatal is the influence of these flattering Guests, which in time starve their Keeper, and finding the House empty, swept, and garnish'd

nish'd, like the Evil Spirit spoken of, *Matt. 12. 45.* go and take with them Seven other Spirits more wicked than themselves, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that Man is worse than the first; and thus they plunder, and boldly rob the Soul of her Riches, and hinder her from that Holiness which is her Food, her Cordial, and her greatest support, and without which no Man can see the Lord; they had need therefore be embittered with something that's sour, and unpleasant to Flesh and Blood, can smite the Stream, and turn those sweeter Waters into Blood, which nothing will do more effectually, than the aforesaid prospect.

2. This embittering of sensual and carnal delights is a thing of the greatest concernment, and therefore must be necessary and all must be concerned in the Vertuous enterprize; the greatest blessings, (the want of which make a Man perfectly miserable) depend upon it, even God's love of

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complacency, and the Application of Christ's Merits, and the Benefits of his Death, and Passion ; these belong not to the Soul, that is enamoured with sensual delights, no more than they appertain to Dogs or Swine ; nay, they are useless, and insignificant to such a Soul, as much as the Mathematicks are to an ass, or idiot. There is a perfect antipathy betwixt these, and the comforts we speak of ; for they are intended only for humble, broken, contrite Hearts, which temper a Person that's fond of sensual delights is not capable of, nor can such a man relish them, they are as Hay, and Straw, and Stubble to him, and like a Person, whose Appetite hath been spoiled by a raging Feaver, he looks upon them as unsavoury, and insipid food, and though he may talk of them, yet it is only as blind men do of colours. As it is in Nature, the Meat we eat must be agreeable to our Stomachs, so it is in Grace. There must be a Holy Principle

ciple within, that makes these Spiritual comforts agreeable to it, but sensual delights destroy that Principle, and as Darkness drives out Light, so these two are incompatible; and indeed our blessed Saviour is very peremptory in his Assertion, That he, who doth not deny himself, cannot be his Disciple, *Matth.* 16. 24. And what self-denial can there be, where we do not deny our selves in that, which is most pernicious to our better part? For so are these sensual delights: Not to be Christ's Disciple, is to have no part in him: Not to have any part in him, is to be none of his Sheep, and not to be of his Sheep, is to be placed with the Goats at the left hand in the last Day, and what the consequence of that is, you may read, *Matth.* 25. 41.

Its true, maugre all that we can say to the contrary, men who are resolved to indulge themselves in their bruitish delights, will notwithstanding the contradiction they must needs

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be guilty of, believe that they are Christ's Disciples, and Favourites of Heaven, and that Christ hath purchased Eternal Life for them, and that at last they shall enjoy it ; but alas ! they know not, what Eternal Life, nor what believing means ; as well may a Man in *Bedlam* fancy himself to be a King, as such Persons, that they are the beloved of God, while they live in that, which is most contrary to his Nature, and like Enemies to the Cross of Christ, like Persons that have nothing but Body, nothing but flesh, nothing but sense about them. If men may be saved contrary to Christ's Word, contrary to his Declaration, contrary to all the most solemn Protestations, he hath made in the Gospel, then such men may be saved, not else ; who can reflect upon these doings without indignation, or grief, or sorrow, or wishing for Rivers of Tears ! That men should pretend to own the Gospel, and yet live directly contrary to the Lawsof it, argues either

malice or distraction, or stupid ignorance ; yet with such men for the most part we have to deal, which makes St. Paul's exhortation highly reasonable, *Finally Brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, and that we may be deliver'd from unreasonable, and wicked men: for all men have not Faith;* 2 Thess. 3. 1, 2. It adds to this embittering our carnal, and sensual delights is that which men for certain shall wish, they had done, when they come to stand before the great Tribunal. In that Day mens Eyes will be open'd, and things will appear to them in other colours, than now they do. Their understandings will not be clogg'd with this World or diversiments. They will have other apprehensions of the Nature of Virtue, and Holiness, and the Truth of what Christ hath deliver'd in the Gospel : The reasonable ness of his Precepts, the Equity of his Commands, the excellency of his

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Doctrine, the Divinity of his Miracles, the infallible certainty of his Promises and Threatnings will all shine bright in their Eyes ; of all these they will be thoroughly convinced, and no doubt, no scruple, no ambiguity will remain as to any of these points ; the vileness of their pleasures, the brutishness of their satisfactions, the rashness of their delights, the baseness of their enjoyments, the brightness of those Virtues they have despised, the Glory of that Grace, which they might have had and would not, and the trivialness of the things, they preferr'd before these, will then appear so plain, so legible, that there will be no room left for ignorance.

It's true, these things might be known here, and would men take the right way, they might come to be convinced, and persuaded of them on this side Eternity, for some we find are fully satisfied as to these particulars, and walk suitably to them,

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and therefore it cannot be impossible for others to attain to it, but their insensibleness is rather an argument of stupid negligence, and willful laziness; and so it must be, where People are not, or pretend not to be satisfied in things of this nature. It is therefore necessary there should a time come, when they shall be able to make no excuse, nor to evade the force of these Truths, and when they shall behold, how wise a choice the self-denying Soul hath made, and what her mortifications, and severities do end in, what applauses they receive in Heaven, what kind looks from the Everlasting Father, what Honour, what Dignity, what ferment is designed and appointed for her, how such a Soul Triumphs at this time over Hell, and Devils, dares all the Furies of the Burning-lake, scorns those foes, which led the sensual Sinner captive, makes her Nest among the Stars of Heaven, is placed in the Quire of Angels, meets with

with all the Carresses of a Gracious God, is encircled with Laurels, and Crowns of Joy, and all her misery, and sorrows, and fears are at an end. Reason tells us that the sensual Sinner when he shall behold all this, will wish, he had follow'd her example, for that's the necessary and eternal Consequence of all imprudent actions, especially those that are grossly so, for after them men do as naturally wish, that they had acted the part of wise men, as *Balaam*, that he might die the Death of the Righteous. Thus men become wise after the Fact, and when they find, what Fools they have been, would be content, that they had foreseen the evil, and hid themselves; who would not wish in that Day he had embittered his sensual delights, that finds he is undone by eating of those luscious Apples? And I need not tell you, that it is every Man's Interest not to do that, which he will wish

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*Prov. 9. 11.*

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he had not done, when it is too late. But of this I have said enough before. The next Point follows, and is a Case of Conscience, how far sensual delights must be embittered with this prospect.

5. Whether a Christian that would be saved, is upon this account obliged to forbear, and abandon all sensual and worldly delights, and recreations whatsoever?

So not a few have thought in the Primitive times which made them retire from the World, and deny themselves in all the comforts of this life and put themselves to very great hardships, and self-denials, being of Opinion, that they who laughed here would mourn hereafter, and such as enjoy'd the good things of this life, would be miserably poor hereafter. They look'd upon the two Worlds as opposites, and consequently believed, that the means to arrive to the happiness of the future, were directly contrary to all present satisfactions; they concluded

ded, that they who would be happy hereafter, must be unhappy here, and that they who would be happy here, could not be so hereafter ; from hence rose their selling all they had, and giving it to the poor, and the strange severities they used upon their Bodies, whereof I have dis-  
*Happy Ascetic*  
tick, p. 425. &  
Seqq.  
coursed elsewhere, and indeed the Gospel, gives very little encouragement to any thing, that favours of worldly pleasure, nor do the Apostles allow much liberty in this particular ; whether it were, that they thought that all sensual delights were improper for a state of persecution, in which the Church then lived, or whether it was, that they were afraid, such delights would damp their Spiritual fervour ; this is certain, that there is little to be gathered from their Writings in favour of Sports, and Recreations.

Yet as strict as the Gospel is, it grants, that we have Bodies, as well  
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as Souls, and that if the Bow be not unbent sometimes the String will crack, and become useless, and though it's possible for our Minds to soar so far above the World, as to know, and care for no other delights, but what favour of God, and the Glories of another Life ; yet those Spiritual delights will not be of any long continuance without the Body be allow'd suitable refreshment and hath its fits of ease, and relaxation. Were not some Divertisements lawful, Christ would scarce have vouchsafed his presence at the Wedding-feast in *Cana*, much less provided them Wine to encourage temperate cheerfulness ; and hither may be refert'd, St. John the Evangelists playing sometimes with a Bird, and going into a common Bath, whereof Ecclesiastical Histories give us an account ; yet since there is nothing more common with men, than to confound their sinful delights with lawful Recreations, it will be necessary here, to explain the Point in

in these following Particulars :

1. This must be laid down, as a grand Principle of our Religion : That a Spiritual delight in God, in a Crucified Saviour, and in the Blessed Effects, and influences of the Holy Ghost, in the Graces and Fruits of the Spirit, in feeling the Operations of the Divine Power & Glory upon our Souls, in the precious Promises of the Gospel, in the Revelations, God hath vouchsafed to Mankind, in the good, we see wrought in our selves, and others, in the Providences of God, and in Contemplation of his various dealings with the several states, orders and degrees of Men, in Psalms, and Hymns, and Praises of the Divine Majesty, in the Thoughts and Expectations of a better Life, in the Treasures God hath laid up for them that fear him, in another World, and in the various Privileges, Prerogatives and advantages of Holy men, &c. It's certain, I say, that de-

*Philip. 4.*

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delighting, and rejoicing in such Spiritual, Objects is the Chief, the Principal and Sovereign delight, which a Christian is with greatest application of Mind to labour after, and in comparison of this, is obliged to count all these outward comforts, Dross and Dung, and Dogs-meat; this is the delight which must engross his Desires, affections, and Inclinations; this must rule in his Soul, this must be Mistress and Queen Regent in his Mind; to this all must stoop, and then things cannot but go well, if this be secured and established. Without worldly Pleasure, Thousands of Saints have arrived to Everlasting Bliss, but without this, none; sensual delights are no part of a Christians comfort, but this Spiritual delight is the one thing necessary; and till a prospect of a future Judgment causes this delight to rise in our Souls, whatever impression it may make, the Plant is not of our Heavenly Fathers planting. Such must

must be the temper of our Souls; in the aforesaid objects our Souls must delight more, then in all Riches, and this delight being once settled in us, such Worldly delights as are subservient to this, and do neither diminish nor darken, nor hinder, nor quench it, may justly be said to be Lawful.

2. This being premised, we do not deny but such Worldly delights, as are neither sinful in themselves, nor apparent occasions of evil, are allowable. And of this nature are all those masculine exercises, whereby the Body is preserved in health, and rendred more capable of serving the Soul in her Religious severities; as walking or riding abroad to take the Air, Planting, Gardening, Raising curious Plants, and Flowers, running, Wrestling, Fowling, Hawking, Hunting, Fishing, Leaping, Vaulting, Casting of the Bar, Tossing the Pike, Riding the great Horse, Running at the Ring, and such divertis-

ments which stir the Blood, make us Active, and Vigorous, fit us for greater and more useful enterprizes, and promote cheerfulness, and liveliness; such cannot be supposed to be forbid by the Gospel, provided that they be used,

1. *Seasonably*, not on those days and hours, which are appointed, either for Devotion, or more weighty businels; and therefore these cannot be proper exercises of the Lords day, or days of Fasting, and Abstinence, or days of Mourning.
2. *With moderation*, so that much time be not spent upon them, and our love to them may keep within its due bounds and limits.
3. *For a good end*, which must be to render our selves fitter for the discharge of our Duty to God and Man.
4. *With purposes of self-denial*, so that we can leave or quit them for a greater good, when either a work of Piety, or an act of Charity is to be performed, or scandal to be prevented; where these limitations are not observ'd,

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the Honey turns into Gall, and that which deserv'd only our civility and transient respect becomes our Idol, and our Souls receive considerable hurt, which, had these diversiments been used with circumspection, might have been beholding to them in some measure for their welfare, and edification.

3. From this Rule we may rationally infer, that delight in Orchards, Gardens, Rivers, Ponds, either Natural or Artificial; and in the comforts of Wife, Children, Friends, in our Trades, and Relations, Houses, Buildings and Possessions, the bountiful hand of Heaven hath bestow'd upon us, is consistent with a serious prospect of a future judgment, not but that excesses may be committed in this delight, as the best and most harmless things may be abused; yet where we delight in them, as they are the gifts of God more, than as they are satisfactions to the Flesh, and build not upon

them , rest not in them , but still look upon them as things volatile, and transitory, and are ready to part with them , whenever providence shall think fit to removè them, without grumbling or murmuring, and do let the World see, that in these delights, we forget not the rules of gravity, modesty, decency and charity , they may lawfully be called inoffensive , and as a Snake whose Teeth are pulled out, handled without danger : And though

*Eccles. 2. 4,*  
8; 10, 11.

Solomon calls these delights Vanity , yet that which made them so, was the immoderateness of his love toward them, and his setting his heart, and doating upon them , and placing felicity in them, making them his mark, which should have been only a païsage to nobler enjoyments, and fixing there , where he should have lodged only as in an Inn, and so march'd on to the City , which hath foundations , whose builder

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and maker is God. Delight in things of this nature may soon run beyond its bounds, if either too much cost be spent upon them, whereby the poor are rob'd of their due, or Men forget to employ their thoughts upon sublimer objects.

4. The same may be said of delight in *Musick*, whether Vocal or Instrumental; a delight harmless enough, if used as Salt, not as Meat, as Sauce, not as Food, as a bit on the By, not as a standing Diet, and though the Men the Prophet speaks of, *Ez. 5. 12.* are severely checked for the Harp and the Viol, the Tabret, and Pipe in their Feasts, yet it was because they made their Musick an *Appendix* to their Drunkenness, and as it is said in the same verse, *regarded not the work of the Lord, neither considered the operation of his hands.* David's playing upon the Harp was no sin, while it was not to encourage wantonness, but with an intent either to Praise

God, or to divert *Sauls* Melancholy ; nor can I discommend the *Pythagoreans*, who before they went to sleep, composed their minds with Musick. We read in *Gellius, Aelian*, and others, how men have been cured not only of irregular passions, but of very strange distempers of the Body by Musick ; and what is signally conducing to the good , and benefit of Mankind, we must suppose is allowed by that God, who himself consults the health and welfare of his

*Creatures* ; and this made  
Gen. 4 21. *Jubas* profession lawful, who was the inventer of Musical instruments, and therefore call'd the Father of all such, as handle the Harp, and Organ. The end , for which such delights are used, makes them either tolerable, or impertinent, and as he that designs them to refresh either his own , or other Mens weary Spirits, and to Glorifie God by them, deserves commendation, so he that makes them instrumental

strumental to feed Mens Lusts, or to promote Lasciviousness , and lightness in conversation , renders himself unworthy of the name of a Christian , and therefore those Fidlers and Musicians, who shew themselves at merry meetings, or Promiscuous Dancings, which serve only to pamper the Flesh, and to encourage extravagance and luxury , will be able to give but a very sad account of their profession , and if ever they come to take a serious view of their past lives, will have reason to wish that they had spent that time in Mourning for their sins : Christianity , which allows us moderate recreation, bids us abhor all delights which serve to render the mind vain , and foolish, and alienate the Soul from her true centre, or tempt us to mispend the precious hours , the Almighty hath lent us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

5. Delight in *Books*, and natural Sciences , such as Astronomy,

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Physick, Philosophy, Mathematicks, Histories of all sorts, and in searching into the Nature of Plants, Stones, Minerals, Fruits, Juices, Herbs, Gums, Birds, Fishes, Beasts, &c. as it is a thing useful, so it cannot be contrary to the rules of Christianity; and though Astrology, as it is abused into telling of Fortunes, and good or ill success in businesses, discovering of thefts, and stolen goods, and knowing future events, is no proper object of this delight, partly because the rules are uncertain and imaginary, partly because it tempts people to unlawful curiosities, partly because the Scripture forbids these fears and hopes, which are grounded upon the aspect of the Signs of Heaven, and looks upon them as mistrusts of the Divine Providence, yet that's no Argument but that a Man may lawfully with some delight inquire into the nature, and influences of the Stars, to see, whether what the World hath talk-

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ed of them, is grounded upon any scientifick principles. I need not say here, that delight in *Magick* or the *Black-art*, as they call it, is as great abomination in the sight of God, as the sin it self; nor can I give any favourable judgment of delight in Palmestry, because that art seems to interfere with that self Resignation and dependance upon the wisdom and goodness of God which is required of us; and even delight in lawful Arts, Books and Sciences, must have its rules, whereby it must steer its course: for the affections may stick too close to delights of this nature, and the delight joustle out our warmer desires after that knowledge, wherein consists Eternal life. An inordinate delight in knowledg was the cause of our first Apostasie; and it's too often seen that our ambition to know, slackens our endevours after a practical love of God, and while we doat upon speculation, we forget to do that which would make

make us like our Father which is in Heaven.

6. Delight in *Drinking and Tippling*, must needs be as odious to God, as delight in Wantonness, or Uncleanness, or Lasciviousness, or Lechery, or impure Kisses, Touches, Glances, Passions, Desires, Thoughts, Gestures, Postures and Imaginations, or Feeding our Eyes with obscene sights, and spectacles, or Filthy, Smutty, and lewd communications, discourses, jests and expressions, &c. For this is to delight in things God hath forbidden, and to take pleasure in that, to which he hath threatned the burning lake, and the Worm that dies not ; and though custom hath made delight in drinking fashionable and he that doth so is not at all reproached, or thought the worse man for it, yet who knows not, that Gods thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor will the Almighty make the Customs of this World, his rule in passing sentence in the last day.

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Not but that a Man may delight in a Cup of Drink, as it is the gift of God , when he is dry , and nature requires it, and necessity calls for it ; but there is a vast difference betwixt satisfying the meer necessities of Nature, and gratifying the desires of voluptuousness and idleness ; to delight in the former is to preserve , but to delight in the other is to weaken and destroy Nature : and where Men are at a loss, how to spend their time , and therefore make drinking their delight and sport, they act like *Solomons* Madman, who cast Firebrands, Arrows, and Death, and says, Am I not in sport ? *Prov.* 26. 18, 19. Nor is it the example of Gentlemen, and persons of Wealth and Quality , that will justifie this dangerous delight at the great Tribunal ; since believing the word of God is a greater duty, than to regard our Neighbours practices, and did the whole World espouse a vice, this would not absolve a Man from

from his obligation to obey that known Law, *Exod. 23. 2. Thou shalt not follow a Multitude to do evil.* The pretence Men have in this case that they have no Calling or Employment, or have nothing to do, and therefore must some way or other divert themselves, is as vain and sinful, as their delight , and the time will come when they will be convinced , that they were under no impossibility to employ themselves in useful exercises , there being innumerable opportunities of doing good, of exhorting, teaching, admonishing, helping, assisting and encouraging our Neighbours , and improving our own minds, and far better ways of spending our time, then in drinking, pledging of healths, talking idly, censuring our Neighbours, pleasing our appetite, keeping ill company, and throwing that away upon our lusts which might with greater satisfaction have been given to Christs distressed members.

7. Delight in *Cards and Dice* is a sport, which very few Divines and wise Men do approve of, and those that have allow'd of it, have given such restrictions, and limitations, as makes it evident, that they wish it were rather totally left then practised with so much danger, as this delight is commonly attended with. The Council

of *Eliberis* would not *Concil. Eli-*  
*ber. c. 79.* admit any person to the

Holy Communion, that plaid at Tables; and if the offender did repent of his sport, it was a whole year after his repentance, before they would admit him to the Holy Table; and to this purpose speaks the Sixth

Council General of *Constantinople*. The truth *Concil. Con-*  
*stantinop. 6. c.*  
*50.*

is, this delight is a manifest occasion of evil, and where there is one that comes off without sinning, there are forty that involve themselves in various transgressions. What wise Man would stand upon a

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Precipice, when he can walk in a beaten Road; and where Men love to go to the utmost limit of what is lawful , they commonly fall , and engage themselves to commit errors, they did not think of ; the Holy Ghost, therefore hath not thought fit to reveal to us these utmost bounds, that we might keep within the compass of known duties , and by a due distance from what is sinful, preserve our Innocence , and Gods Favour. We blame Children for meddling with Knives, and Swords, they know not how to use, and why should we be guilty of a folly, and imprudence, we condemn in them ? He that abstains from Cards and Dice, most certainly doth not sin, and who would not take the surest side of the Hedg.

Those Casuists who do allow of this recreation, make it lawful only with these proviso's. 1. Provided,that Men play without eagerness, or being much concerned. 2. That they give

give no occasion to Men to quarrel.

3. That they give all the Money they win to the poor, or some pious use, else it is a sign they do not play for recreation, but for gain.
4. That they spend but very little time in it, not above an hour or two.
5. That they avoid all light, vain and Foolish words, jests and expressions.
6. That the end they propose to themselves, be only to exhilarate their spirits ; that they may with greater cheerfulness apply themselves to more useful labours.
7. That they play without using any fraud, or deceit.
8. That they give no offence to them, who are weak in faith.
9. That they do not comply with the sinful actions, speeches, and behaviour of those they play with.

And with these restrictions, I question not, but this recreation may be lawful ; and the same may be said of Bowling, and some other diversions of this Nature. What some Divines object here, that playing

ing at Cards and Dice is a thing of the Nature of Lots, and these being things sacred, ought not to be made Jocular, hath not that substance in it, which at first sight, it seems to have, for though these Games and the events of them, be things casual, yet every thing that's casual, is not therefore of the Nature of a Lot, else a mans putting his hand in his Pocket, and taking out what Money comes next to his hand, and dropping it among People that stand underneath, whereby one gets a Shilling, another Six-pence, a third a Groat, must be called a Lot to; But however , Let's grant, that these Games are of the nature of Lots, how doth it follow from hence, that all Lots are things sacred ; because sometimes there is a sacred use made of them, must therefore the use of them be sacred at all times? There is a sacred use made of dreams, of Bread and Wine, of Clay and Spittle, &c. but must these things therefore be sacred at all times and in all

all places ? As well might a Man infer, that all Worship is Religious because some is such ; if it be said, that in Lots there is either a tacit or express imploring of a Divine determination ; I answer, that in some Lots there hath been such a thing practised, but that therefore the same must be practised in all Lots whatsoever, is absurd to imagine. The Apostles indeed *Act. 1. 24.* when they cast Lots add a Prayer to it, but the additional Prayer is not therefore necessary in all Lots, because some persons upon special occasions have made use of it. A Lot or casting of Lots is properly an action of meer Contingency, used to determine a question by the event, which action, if it be used in things sacred and of great consequence, may justly be seconded with formal Prayer, and imploration of the Divine direction, but if used in things civil, ordinary and trivial, there is no need of any such sacred Rite or Ceremony ; That God

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hath a hand in all Lots, is no argument, that no Lot may therefore be jocular, for God hath a hand in our laughter, and in other contingent things which are jocular, yet doth it not follow from thence, that they are therefore absolutely unlawful, but only as circumstances, and the abuse of them may make them so. However, my intent is not to turn advocate for Gamesters, who abuse these recreations, as much as the Drunkard doth his Wine, and strong Liquor. I have therefore limited the sport, which limitations shew, how dangerous the recreation is, and how he that plaies at these Games walks in a manner upon Thorns, and had therefore need walk very cautiously, that some mischief do not befall him.

If the aforesaid restrictions be observ'd, it's a sign we make some conscience of our ways, and with *David*, set the Lord in all places before our eyes. I am sensible, Men will plead impossibility of keeping to these bounds, and pre-

pretend that this way they shall have no sport ; but if it be so, and they cannot play without greater liberty or licentiousness , it's not only far better, but necessary totally to abstain from it. He that knows such a diet will not agree with him, by a natural instinct forbears , and refuses to meddle with it ; and if we know that by such recreations our Souls cannot live according to the strict Rules of conscience, what can be more reasonable than to shun and avoid them ? wisdom is as necessary in spiritual things as in temporal, and he that doth not practise it in the concerns of his Soul, as well as in those of his Body, cannot be supposed to be a man of any ardent devotion.

8. Delight in Feasting, or in going to Feasts, though this seems to be harmless, and some will wonder, why this should be brought upon the Stage, and the lawfulness of it question'd, yet there are Rocks even in this delight, which if the Soul

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doth not shun, it may be in danger of Ship-wreck, and though it's true, that Eating and Drinking, and Sleeping, and using Physick, where the body is in danger, are necessary delights, and such without which nature cannot be kept in its due order and health, and aptitude for working, yet Intemperance may be committed in all these, and consequently, these delights deserve to be taken notice of, and fenced with suitable cautions, that we do not exceed our measure.

And as nothing is more certain, than that the voluptuousness of *Cleopatra*, *Heliogabalus*, *Apicius*, and other Gluttons, is a most detestable vice, so it may justly be demanded, whether Feasting, which borders upon that voluptuousness especially if a man take delight and pleasure in it, may not deserve very great circumspection. *Plato* look'd upon *Dionysius* as a Monster, because he did eat twice a day, yet cannot this be

be a rule, whereby we may give judgment of this delight, since the Constitutions, Climates, Countreys, and the complexions and necessities of Men require various applications of food and nourishment.

That Feasts are things lawful in themselves, no man of sense or reason can deny, for not only the examples of Holy men in Scripture but Gods Command, or Permission to the Jews, *Deut. 4. 26.* are a sufficient demonstration; and the Love-Feasts, the Primitive Christians used, St. Jude approves of, *v. 12.* not to mention that they are bonds of Union and preservatives of Friendship and Respect, and that the univerial consent of Nations doth warrant them.

These Feasts, as they are usual either at Inaugurations, or at Nuptials, or upon some other solemn occasions, or among Friends and Relations, so the delight a Christian takes either in making them, or in

going to them, must be regulated by these following observations.

As to the Party that makes them ;  
 1. That he do not confine his invitation to the Rich and Wealthy, and who are able to Feast him again, but extend it withal to the Poor and Naked, to the Blind and to the Lame , according to Christs Rule, *Luke 14. 13, 14.* 2. That he do not make any Feasts for ostentation sake , but with a pious intent of preserving and augmenting Friendship, and Love and Charity ; for ambition to be talked of and commended, is against the general prohibition of desiring vain Glory, *Gal. 5. 26.* 3. That he do not Feast on those days on which a Nation Fasts, or Humbles it self, to deprecate Gods wrath and anger, for this is expresly forbid , *Amos 6. 4, 5, 6.* 4. That he do not study too great curiousness, or delicacy in his Dishes, nor bestow too much cost upon the entertainment , for this looks like expecting

expecting of applauses, and catching the Praises, and admirations of men, which is below a Philosopher and therefore much more a Christian.

5. That he leave every Guest to his choice and liberty, and press no person to Eat or Drink more than satisfies nature, in which particular, *Ahashuerus* his practice is to be commended, *Est.* 1. 5. 6. That he suggest unto his Guests opportunities to discourse of Subjects grave, and serious either Divinity or History, or something useful to the Publick, or Philosophy whereby his Friends may receive some Edification, and this seems to be the purport of St. Paul's admonition, *1 Cor.* 10. 31. 7. That he encourage nothing of ribald talk, no promiscuous Dancing, no Ballads, no vain drinking of Healths, no Apish actions of Fools, and Jesters, and give no occasion by word or deed, to contention or unseemly behaviour in any man, for this were to make himself accessory to other

mens sins ; a thing contrary to the Law of Christ, *1 Tim. 5. 22.*

As to the Party that goes to a Feast ; his delight deviates from the rule of the Gospel, if, i. He goes to it with no higher intent than to please, and to fill his Belly with the good cheer he hopes to find there. These are base ends, differ not from those of bruits, and discover a temper that hath not yet tasted of the Powers of the World to come. It's true, whoever goes to a Feast, goes with an intent to eat there, but to a Christian Philosopher this is only a subordinate end, in this he places no felicity, with this he doth not greatly please himself, but a desire to express his respect and affection to his Friend, hopes of hearing or doing some good at such times, and a design by his own temperance and sobriety to teach, or invite others to their Duty, these are the principal ends, which make him go ; and this is most agreeable not only to the rules of

of his faith but to reason too. 2. His delight grows irregular, and sinful, if he sits very long at it, for hereby much time is lost, and God expressly Condemns it, *Ez. 5. 11.* Time, as it is one of the richest Talents God vouchsafes us, so care must be taken, that much of it be not spent upon carnal satisfactions, which are things too mean, to throw away so great a treasure upon, and though that time at Feasts and entertainments is well spent, which is spent in serious and profitable discourses, and conferences, yet since these are altogether out of Fashion, and people think they are not welcome, except they may laugh at every trifle, and speak whatever comes next, this makes spending but little time at such meetings necessary, for the longer this unprofitable spending lasts, the greater grows our account, and with the account our inexcusableness. 3. His delight degenerates, if at such times he be not a strict observer

ver of the rule of temperance. Feasts as they require guests, so they require self-denial in the guests too; and though I cannot much commend the Custom of the *Pythagoreans*, who would come to a Feast, and to let men see their victory over their appetite, depart from it without eating any thing, yet to eat and drink with great moderation, is at such times the more necessary, by how much the temptations are greater; and St. Hieroms rule in this case is, so to eat and drink, as not to indispose our selves after it, for Prayer and Meditation.

9. Delight in *fashionable Cloaths and Habits*, though the great liberty Men and Women take in things of this nature, hath infected peoples minds with that stupidity, that few do think it worth questioning, whether it be lawful or no, yet notwithstanding all this, he that shall impartially exa-

examine the various invectives the Holy Ghost makes against this delight, will think himself concern'd to be more inquisitive into this point; Cloaths as they were given,

1. To cover our nakedness.
2. To keep out cold and other injuries of the Air.
3. To make a difference betwixt Men and Women.
4. To consult the health of our Bodies, which being subject to sweats and perspirations, are hereby refresh'd.
5. To distinguish Men in Places, Offices, Dignities from the meaner sort, the Noble from the Ignoble, and consequently to keep up order in a Commonwealth, or Kingdom; as they were designed by the Almighty for such uses, so we see that where persons suffer their affections to delight in the fineries and fashions and modishness of them, their minds are too often drawn away from more excellent satisfactions, vanity enters into them, and what-

*Ez. 3. 18, 19,  
20, 21.*

*1 Tim. 2. 9, 10.  
1 Pet. 3. 3, 4*

whatever formality they may keep up in matters of Religion, Spiritual things begin to be dull, and insipid to them, at least their relish, and admiration doth in a great measure decay and vanish.

I know not how it comes to pass, but experience assures us, that simplicity in Cloaths doth very much cherish seriousnes, as vanity and excess in such things doth strangely weaken and debilitate its force and power; and though Clothes seem to be forrein to Religion, and small, inconsiderable trifles, yet so it is, that the smaller and the more trivial some things appear, the more insensibly do they incroach upon the Spiritual part, the Soul, and render it earthly and sensual, and therefore deserve our greater cautiousness

and circumspection.

*De Serm. in monte*  
lib. 2.

St. Austin therefore

is very peremptory.

‘He that is fond, saith he, of outward splendor, whether in Clothes,

or

' or other things soon betrays himself that he is in love with the Pomp and Glory of the World , nor can such a person deceive any serious man with a shew of holiness.

As it was part of our Saviours Province to reduce things to the primitive institution , so if we reflect, how God when he cloth'd our first Parents did not study splendour, but necessity , not gayety, but conveniency, and made them Coats of Skins, and by so doing warned us against Pride and extravagance ; we shall find but little reason to be fond of over curious, and fashionable habits, especially if we cast our eyes upon the Original of Clothes, for sin caused shame, and shame produced Clothing.

I do not deny, but that it is lawful to make use, not only of a plain and homely suite , but of richer Vestments and Habiliments, for since God hath allowed us not only Bread and Water for our sustenance, but vari-

variety of food if used with moderation and thanksgiving ; so I doubt not but richer habits, especially if our Places, Offices, and Stations, and Ranks oblige us to it, may be allowable ; but it's one thing to go rich and gaudy meerly because our condition requires it, another to delight and take pleasure, and great satisfaction in it ; for this insensibly emasculates the mind, depresses it, and renders it vain and enamoured with the World.

Every Man that strives for mastery, is temperate in all things saith St. Paul, *1 Cor. 9. 25.* It's evident that we all profess striving for an incorruptible Crown, and if temperance in all things be necessary in order to it, this temperance must necessarily appear in our Clothes, as well as Diet, else the temperance is partial, and consequently no part of that wisdom which is from above.

A Christian should be the humblest, gravest, and modestest Creature living, and who can be so irrational as to think, that delight in imitating every fashion, is agreeable to this gravity, modesty and humility; and though what *Judas* said, *Job.* 12. 5. was spoke with an ill end, yet it may justly enough be applyed to the case in hand, *Why might not such things purely superfluous be sold, and given to the poor?* That by such things there is injustice done to the poor, who might be fed with these superfluities, wise Men have complained in most Ages; In the Primitive Church, when Men priz'd Religion at a higher rate, it was a thing very common for persons who were converted, for Women especially, when God was pleased to give them a vehement desire after the felicity of the next life, to sell all their richer Garments and feed Christs poor Disciples with the Money, and for the future, to give that away to charitable uses,

which

which formerly they used to bestow upon their luxury in Clothing. They knew they had nobler things to mind, then adorning of this Lump of Flesh, which was shortly to be meat for Worms, and to putrefie in the Grave, and thought, that while they were curious in dressing, and covering their Bodies, they should forget to trim their Souls, and while their better part and its beauty engrossed their desires and affections, they were the less curious in the setting out and garnishing of the other.

Women, as they are naturally more prone to this delight, so the *Apostles* in giving precepts about Clothing, do in a peculiar manner address themselves to them, justly supposing that if it be unlawful for them, men, who have not ordinarily that inclination nor those temptations to it that they have, ought to think themselves obliged to

<sup>1</sup> Tim. 2. 9.

<sup>1</sup> Pet. 3. 3.

to live above it; and though I do not think, that in those places broidered Hair, and Gold, and Pearls, and costly Aray, are absolutely forbidden, yet they are so far forbid, as they are impediments to Godliness, to shame-facednes, sobriety, modesty, good works, and the growth of the hidden man in the Heart, and to that Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price, as is evident from the opposition the Apostles make between the one and the other; and that delight in such Cloaths is a great Enemy to all these, I need produce no other Argument, but what is drawn from common experience.

That which is usually pleaded for peoples going rich, and splendid, that by doing so, they set poor men to work, who would be at a loss for a livelyhood, if they did not take off their commodities, such as modish Laces, Ribbands, Silks, Velvets,

M Em-

Embroideries, &c. is a pretence rather than an argument, and seems rather invented, as a *salvo* for Peoples vanity , than a testimony of the sincerity of their intentions ; for not to mention , that at this rate men might argue , that Players , Fencers , Bull-baiters , Jugglers , &c. would want employment , if men did not go to see their sports ; were there no persons to take off such things at their hands , men would betake themselves to other Trades and Callings , and Professions . However in these cases , it's worth examining our consciences , whether we wear these things out of compassion to the poor workmen , or out of Pride and delight in the Pomp and Splendour of the World ; and if we deal faithfully with our own hearts , we shall soon find , that the pity we pretend to the workmen , is only a Cloak to cover the secret satisfaction , we take in conforming to the World ; and this is evident from hence , that let the

the workmen work never so hard, if the thing they make, be not exactly in the fashion, I see no person so charitable as to take it off of their hands.

There is no doubt but a Woman, who is married is in a great measure obliged to please her Husband, and the Apostle seems to allow so much, *1 Cor. 7. 34.* and from hence this conclusion is commonly drawn, that if it be the Husbands pleasure, that the Wife shall go fine and gaudy, it is her duty to obey; nor do I perceive, that Divines do ordinarily find fault with this conclusion, for fine Cloaths being things in themselves indifferent, lawful, or unlawful, according to the end and design, Men and Women have in them, and the use they make of them; if the parties conscience that wears them, bears her witness, that not out of any delight, or satisfaction, or secret

*Vid. Cyprian. de  
Habit. virg. Ed.  
Oxon. p. 95.*

M 2      pleasure

pleasure in such gauds, and empty things, but meerly out of obedience to her Husband, she both buys and puts them on, much may be said in her justification, for though this desire in her Husband may be irregular, and an argument that he hath no very great sense of Religion, yet the thing being in it self indifferent, the Wife in this case may lawfully comply, as Mothers and Nurses please froward Children by whistling or singing a childish tune to them. It

was from hence, that

*Esth. 14. 16.*

Queen *Esther* professes to God in her Prayer,

that it was not any fondness to that rich habit she wore, or any delight she took in't, that made her put it on, but a desire to comply with the King, and that as to the Cloaths themselves, she looked upon them as menstrual raggs. So that the result of all is this:

Rich

Rich Clothes may be worn, 1. Provided that we do not wear them out of emulation, with an intent to vye with our neighbours, or to let them see, that we have as much Money, and can afford it, as well as they. 2. Provided that all Pride and Ostentation in things of this nature be laid aside, and that we do not think our selves the better men for these accoutrements, nor despise others, who either will not, or cannot imitate us. 3. Provided that we do not make them allurements to Lusts, or baits of Vanity, nor wear them to attract the applause and courtship, and commendations of spectators, nor hope to be therefore admired by the croud, or Men of little consideration, nor seek to deceive others by this outside, thereby to obtain our base and sinister designs. 4. Provided that the Place, Calling, Office and Dignity in the Kingdom, or Commonwealth, we live in, require it.

5. Provided that we spend but very little time in putting on such habits. 6. Provided that in the putting of them on, or wearing of them, we reflect much on the nobler Garb of the Kings Daughter, which is all Glorious within, and how far greater satisfaction it is to be Clothed with the Garment of righteousness and humility. 7. Provided that we do it only to please those whom God hath made our Superiours, and Governours, whether in the Civil or Oeconomick State. 8. Provided that in these habits we behave ourselves with that modesty, gravity, and gentleness, as becomes Christians. 9. Provided that we do not go to the extream of every fashion, but keep within the compafs of these modes, and imitate the most Religious, and the most moderate persons. 10. Provided that we do deny our selves in the number of them, and bestow the superfluous upon those that want them more than

than we , or give something equivalent to such, as are in straits and necessities ; in a word, that we do not forget to Clothe the naked, nor hide our selves from our own flesh , as God speaks, *Ez. 58. 7.*

With these restrictions I doubt not, but rich Clothes may lawfully be wore , though still I say , that the plainer and more modest our outward habit is, the nearer we approach that Christian simplicity , which God hath the greatest value for. But for any delight in splendid habits, or being pleased, or tickling our fancy and imagination with them, that's a thing which no serious Christian can allow of, and the Primitive believers were so peremptorily against it, that they scarce looked upon such persons as Christians.

To this purpose St. *Cyprian* doth very pathetically address himself to the Virgins of that Age. ‘ Some of you, saith he, are Rich, and a-

M 4      ‘ bound

‘ bound in Wealth, and these pre-  
‘ tend that they may lawfully make  
‘ a shew of their Riches in their out-  
‘ ward dress, and use those blessings

‘ God hath given them.

*Cyprian de Ha-  
bit. Virgin.*

‘ But be it known to  
‘ you, that she is pro-  
‘ perly Rich that is Rich toward  
‘ God, and the only Wealthy who is  
‘ Wealthy in *Christ Jesus*; these are  
‘ the true Riches which are Spiritual,  
‘ Divine, and Heavenly, which lead  
‘ us unto God, and are like to con-  
‘ tinue with us in the presence of  
‘ God for ever; But as to other  
‘ things which are pleasing to the  
‘ World, and remain in the World,  
‘ those ought to be despised as much  
‘ as the World it self, whose Pomp  
‘ and Glory we then renounced, when  
‘ in our Baptism we gave our selves  
‘ up to God. St. John therefore ad-  
‘ jures us; love not the World, nor  
‘ the things that are in the World,  
‘ for if any man love the World,  
‘ the love of the Father is not in  
‘ him,

'him, for all that is in the World,  
'the lust of the Flesh, and the lust  
'of the Eye, and the pride of Life,  
'is not of the Father, but is of the  
'World, and the World passeth away,  
'and the lust thereof, but      <sup>1 John 2.</sup>  
'he that doth the will of      <sub>15, 16.</sub>  
'God abideth for ever.

*1 John 2.  
15, 16.*

‘Therefore Divine and Eternal  
‘Objects must be pursued, and all  
‘things done according to the will  
‘of God, that we may tread in our  
‘great Masters steps. Thou saist thou  
‘art rich, but St. *Paul* answers  
‘the objection, and confines thy  
‘Garments and Habit to certain  
‘bounds, and so doth St. *Peter*, and if  
‘they oblige even Wives to the obser-  
‘vance of this rigor, and Ecclesi-  
‘astical discipline, who have some-  
‘what to plead for themselves, be-  
‘cause they must please their Hus-  
‘bands, how much more is a Virgin  
‘tyed to live up to these holy rules  
‘who hath no excuse for her gaudy  
‘dress; Thou saist, thou art rich  
‘and

‘ and canst afford it ; but all that  
‘ thou canst do, is not therefore law-  
‘ ful to do, nor must the luxurious  
‘ desires of the Flesh, which rise only  
‘ from ambition, go beyond the li-  
‘ mits of Virginity, since it is writ-  
‘ ten ; All things are lawful , but  
‘ all are not expedient. Thou  
‘ faist, thou art rich, and therefore  
‘ thinkest thou mayst use what God  
‘ hath bestowed upon thee ; use it  
‘ in the name of God, but then use  
‘ it to such things , as God hath  
‘ commanded. Let the poor find  
‘ that thou art rich, let the needy  
‘ feel that thou dost abound ; gain  
‘ thy God by thy patrimony, feed  
‘ the hungry Jesus, and lay up thy  
‘ treasure there where Thieves can-  
‘ not break in and steal ; get thee pos-  
‘ sessions, but let them be Celestial,  
‘ such as the Moth cannot corrupt,  
‘ nor Rust eat away, nor the Hail  
‘ destroy, nor the Sun dry up, nor  
‘ the Rain melt away : Thou sinnest  
‘ against God, if thou thinkest thy  
‘ riches

' riches are given thee not to make a  
 ' wholesome use of them : God hath  
 ' given man a voice, must he there-  
 ' fore sing amorous, and undecent,  
 ' and obscene tunes with it : God  
 ' hath made Iron, must thou there-  
 ' fore murther men with it ; and be-  
 ' cause he hath vouchsafed unto us  
 ' Frankincense and Wine and Fire,  
 ' must we therefore sacrifice to Idols ;  
 ' or because thy Herds and Flocks  
 ' are great, must thou therefore  
 ' commit Idolatry with them ? Rich-  
 ' es are great temptations except  
 ' they be employed to pious uses.  
 ' In Scripture the Whore  
 ' of *Babylon* is brought Rev. 17. 4.  
 ' in , array'd in Purple and Scarlet  
 ' colours , and decked with Gold,  
 ' and Precious Stone and Pearl, and  
 ' her Judgment is said to be great  
 ' and terrible, and the Prophet *Esaias*  
 ' threatens a fatal humiliation to the  
 ' Daughters of *Sion* , because of their  
 ' bravery ; when they were exalted  
 ' thus, they fell , being trimmed  
     ' thus,

'thus, they deserved to have their  
 'perfumes turned into a stink , be-  
 'ing deck'd with Silk and Purple,  
 'they could not put on Christ, be-  
 'ing adorned with Bracelets and  
 'Jewels , they lost the true Orna-  
 'ment of their hearts and consci-  
 'ences ; who would not shun that  
 'whereby others have perished ?  
 'Who would desire that which hath  
 'been a Sword and Arrow to others ?  
 'If a man should drop down dead up-  
 'on drinking of a Cup, we should  
 'conclude it was Poyson that killed  
 'him ; and what stupid ignorance of  
 'the truth must it be?what madness,to  
 'be fond of that, which hath always  
 'done , and still doth hurt, and to  
 'imagin thou shalt not be undone  
 'by that , whereby thou knowest  
 'others have been ruin'd ?

Thus far St. *Cyprian*, who lived  
 about the year of our Lord 248,  
 an eminent Bishop, and who after-  
 wards died a Martyr in Christs cause,  
 and in all probability spoke not only  
 his

his own sense, but the judgment of the universal Church in this point. I will conclude this subject with a passage out of *Tertullian, St. Cyprians Master,*

*Tertull. de cult.*

*Fæmin. lib. 2.*

*c. 13.*

who thus reasons the case with the Women of his Age:

' What means that saying, let  
 ' your light shine before men; Why  
 ' doth our Lord call us the light  
 ' of the World? Why doth he com-  
 ' pare us to a City seated upon a Hill,  
 ' if we shine not in darkness, or  
 ' do not stand up among the drowned  
 ' part of the World? If thou hide  
 ' thy candle under a Bushel, thou  
 ' must needs, being left in the dark,  
 ' be subject to numberless assaults.  
 ' These are the things which make  
 ' us lights of the World, even our  
 ' good works. True goodness is  
 ' not enamoured with darkness, but  
 ' rejoices to be seen, and is glad to  
 ' be pointed at. A modest and shame-  
 ' faced Christian doth not think it  
 ' enough, that he is so, but he de-  
 ' lights

' lights to appear so too ; for such  
 ' must be the fullness of his ver-  
 ' tues, that it may burst out from the  
 ' mind within, to the habit without,  
 ' and press from the conscience to  
 ' the outward man, that men from  
 ' without may see what store, and  
 ' treasure he hath in the secret re-  
 ' cesses of his Soul. Voluptuous-  
 ' ness, and Wantonness must be re-  
 ' nounced, for by these the Vertue of  
 ' Faith loses its masculine vigor.  
 ' I doubt the hand, that hath been  
 ' used to Bracelets, will never en-  
 ' dure the sturdiness of a Chain for  
 ' Christ Jesus ; nor can I apprehend,  
 ' how the Knee used to a soft Garter  
 ' will be able to endure the Stocks,  
 ' or Racks for the Gospel, and I very  
 ' much question, whether that Neck  
 ' which glistered with Pearles, and  
 ' precious Stones, will ever yield un-  
 ' to the Sword of persecution ; there-  
 ' fore my beloved, let's chuse hard  
 ' and uneasie things and we shall not  
 ' feel them, let's forsake the pleasant  
     ' things

' things of this World, and we shall  
 ' not desire them ; these are the An-  
 ' chors of our hope ; let's lay aside  
 ' these outward gayeties, if we aim at  
 ' the Wedding Garment in Heaven,  
 ' let not Gold prove the object of our  
 ' love, by which the sins of *Israel*  
 ' are expressed ; let's hate that which  
 ' hath undone the *Patriarchs*, and  
 ' was adored by them after they  
 ' had forsaken the fountain of living  
 ' waters. Come forth beloved,  
 ' and set before you the rich at-  
 ' tire of the Prophets and Apostles  
 ' of our Lord ; take your fairness  
 ' from their simplicity, your blushes  
 ' from their modesty , paint your  
 ' eyes with their shamefacedness,  
 ' and your lips with their self-denial  
 ' in speaking ; instead of Pendants  
 ' insert in your ears the word of  
 ' God, and let your necks bear the  
 ' yoke of Christ Jesus ; submit your  
 ' heads to your own Husbands, and  
 ' then you'll be dressed like Christians,  
 ' employ your hands about Wool, and  
 ' as

' as much as you can, keep at home,  
 ' and this will render you more  
 ' amiable than Gold; Clothe your  
 ' selves with the Silk of Innocence,  
 ' with the Velvet of Holiness, and  
 ' with the Purple of Chastity, and  
 ' thus adorned, God will fall in love  
 ' with you.

10. Delight in *Painting* and  
*Patching*, and artificial meliorations  
 of the Face and Skin, to please and  
 delude spectators, or to draw others  
 into admiration of our persons, as

*Vid. Celada com-  
 mentar. in Judith,  
 c. 10*  
*Plutarch. in A-  
 popbthegm. Elian  
 var. Hist. l. 8.*

it is a thing which  
 the very Heathens  
 have condemn'd for  
 reasons drawn from  
 the light of nature, so

it is almost needless  
 to discourse of it, or to batter it  
 with Arms and Weapons out of  
 the Magazine of the Gospel. This  
 delight hath in most Ages been in-  
 famous and the thing it self count-  
 ed incongruous with the Law of our  
 very Creation. The Fathers of the  
 second

second, third and fourth Centuries derive the Original of it from the Devil, and will allow nothing of this nature in any person, that looks like a Christian. It's a sign that the Spirit of Christ doth not dwell in a person that dares delight in such vanities, for that Spirit inclines the Soul to other things, makes her regardless of beauty and external comeliness, obliges her solicitous about inward accomplishments, and how she may please him, that died, and hath purchased an eternal Salvation for her; and it's enough, that he that hath *not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his.*

*Rom. 8. 9.*

A Soul that hath the Spirit of Christ, hath other things to do, then spend her time and care in mending the Face; for they that are after the *Flesh, do mind the things of the Flesh, but they that are after the*

*Rom. 8. 5.*

*Spirit, the things of the Spirit. And what are the things of the Spirit,*

N but

but setting our affections upon the things which are above, meditating of the purchased possession, longing after the light of Gods countenance, despising the World, self-denyal, taking up the Cross of Christ, a transcendent love of God, a burning zeal to his Glory, laying up in store a good foundation against the time to come, growing strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, resisting temptations, growing in grace, labouring after a greater hatred of sin, a greater fortaste of Heaven, a greater conformity to the will of God, a greater sense of the love of God, &c. and he that in good earnest minds these things will have no great desire to busie himself about such pittiful, trivial, and impertinent things, these will be trash and dirt to him, and his soul will soar above them, and scorn them, as the Divels lime-twigs whereby he lies in wait to deceive. And though I will not deny but that

a man in case of danger, and when his life is in jeopardy, or when he would pass through a party of his enemies, may lawfully disguise himself, and by art change and alter his countenance, that he may not be known; and though a man who hath lately had the small Pox, or hath been Sun-burnt, or whose face hath been parch'd with Wind, may lawfully take care by ordinary helps to reduce his face to his former, or native colour, and complexion; and though we do not judge it against the law of God, to hide some great blemish or defect in the Face whereby spectators may be offended, and particularly Women that are with Child, frightened; and though it is not inconsistent with the rule of the Gospel, to wash the Face when dirty; yet all those paints and additional washes, and artificial black spots, whereby Men and Women endeavour either to set off their complexion

the better, to give themselves a more pleasing colour or to mend their meen, or to make themselves look more beautiful, or to attract the eyes, and admiration, and sometimes the unlawful *Amours* of those they converse withal, are things which a Christian must be a stranger too.

When I say men, it is not without reason, for we read of such *Platin. in Paul. 2.* a beast as *Paul*, the Second

Pope of *Rome*, who whenever he went abroad, painted himself, that the beauty of his Face might in some measure be answerable to the comeliness of his stature, which was procere and tall, and it's to be feared, that this effeminacy dwells in too many persons of the masculine Sex at this day ; However, as Women are usually more faulty, this way then Men, so they give us but small hopes to believe, that they are heirs of Heaven, while they are so industrious to please men and others here on Earth.

St. Paul

St. *Paul* would not please Men no not in the Ceremonies of the Law, which were things formerly commanded by God, thinking it unworthy of a Christian, that had been freed from that Yoke by the Son of God; and how unworthy must it be then to please Men in things, which God hath never commanded, nay by many hints and places discover'd his dislike of? How justly may God look upon't as presumption, to alter that Face which he thought fit to create in that shape it is of? and what is it but contending with our Maker, and expostulating with the Potter, Why hast thou made me thus? and troubling his art and wisdom, while not content with the countenance he hath given, we seek to appear in a better.

As we are Christians sincerity must be our character, not only in heart but in the outward behaviour, and what sincerity can there be in cheating Men with our Faces, and to make them believe that to be natural,

which we know is counterfeit and artificial ? We that are naturally prone to pride, and levity, and lightness of deportment had not need encourage it by such incentives, and put Oyl to that fire which without great help is apt to burn into Hell. We shall meet with impediments enough from the World, and the Devil, in our spiritual race ; it's madness therefore to encrease those obstacles by new inventions of our own, and we that know how apt every thing is to damp our holy fervours had not need add such vanities to extinguish them.

In the whole Scripture we read of no Women that ever painted themselves, but one that was cursed to a Proverb, even Jezebel, 2 Kings 9.

*Euseb. lib. 3. c. 15.* 33. and *Eusebius* makes mention of a great instrument of the Devil whereby he sowed heresies in the Church, that used this trade, viz. *Maximilla*. Even among the Heathen, those

those that did so, were none of the best fame and credit in the World, such as *Poppaea Nero's Wife*, and others, and in Holy writ for the most part this delight is described as meretricious, and a quality of Strumpets and Harlots, as we see, *Ezech.*

*23. 40.*

And certainly neither these examples nor descriptions can be any great inticement to a Christian to imitate such infamous patterns, who is to remember those who have spoken to him in the name of the Lord, and to follow their faith, considering the end of their conversation *Heb.*

*13. 7.*

It was an excellent Character St. *Gregory Nazianzene* gave of the pious *Gorgia*, 'No Gold, faith he,  
 ' adorned her Temples,  
 ' no flaxen hair, no borrowed locks,  
 ' no artificial curles flew about her  
 ' sacred Head, no flowing Mantles,  
 ' no transparent Vails, no looser garb

Gregor. Naz.  
*in laudem Gor-*  
*gon.*

N 4

'that

‘that wanton’d in the Air, no costly  
‘stones vying with the brightness of  
‘the Stars, no Painters arts help’d  
‘to grace her noble frame, no opera-  
‘tor assisted her to countermine the  
‘work of God in her, and by deceit-  
‘ful colours to hide the curious fa-  
‘brick of her Face, or to prostitute  
‘the Divine shape that was in her,  
‘to wanton, and impurer eyes, or  
‘to vitiate her natural image, which  
‘was reserved for God, and ano-  
‘ther World, by an adulterous, ficti-  
‘tious beauty. But even then, when  
‘she was acquainted with all the tricks  
‘and modes of ornaments, she would  
‘acknowledge and own none but  
‘whather piety, and the harmony of  
‘her soul did give her. No other Red  
‘pleased her, but what her modest  
‘blushes caused, no white but what  
‘fasting and abstinence brought into  
‘her cheeks, and as for Painting and  
‘modish looks, and borrow’d Beauty  
‘she left those impertinencies, and  
‘vanities to actors and Ministers of  
‘the

'the Stage, persons who have forgot  
'to blush, and are ashamed of nothing  
'so much as of sobriety and gravity.

This is an example for all Christian Women, to write Copies by ; and though the age we live in, hath long ago learned to despise this self-denial , as a starcht formality and precise niceness, yet that doth not make it of less value before Almighty God, who sees with other eyes, and is resolved to rectifie these willful mistakes , if other means here on Earth will not do it, with Eternal Vengeance.

To this purpose St. Cyprian, 'Art  
'not thou afraid, vain  
'Woman, who makest *De Habit. virg.*  
p. 100.  
'use of Paint , and  
'Washes, and such other curious foole-  
'ries about thy Face, art not thou afraid that thy Creator , when thou  
'comest before him, will not know  
'thee, but exclude thee rather from  
'the promised Inheritance ? May not  
'he reasonably use the language of a  
'Censor,

' Censor, and a Judge, and say, This  
 ' is not my Creature, here I see no-  
 ' thing of my Image ; Thou hast  
 ' polluted thy skin with false appli-  
 ' cations, the hair I gave thee is  
 ' changed by Adulterous colours, thy  
 ' face is nothing but a lie, the figure  
 ' of it is corrupted, it is another thing,  
 ' than what it was ; how canst thou  
 ' see God when thou hast not the  
 ' looks God gave thee, but infected  
 ' rather by the Devil ? Him thou  
 ' hast follow'd, thou hast imitated  
 ' the Old Serpent, thou had borrowed  
 ' truly Ornaments from thine enemy ,  
 ' and with him thou must burn. O  
 ' my Friends, are not these things  
 ' to be considered by Gods servants ?  
 ' are not these things at which they  
 ' may justly tremble day and night ?  
 ' Let those who are married, and flat-  
 ' ter themselves, that they do it in  
 ' complifance to their Husbands,  
 ' look to it, and see whether they  
 ' do not in making such excuses,  
 ' accuse themselves of being partners  
     ' in

' in the sin ; and as for Virgins and  
 ' Maids who use these unlawful arts,  
 ' I cannot reckon them in the num-  
 ' ber of true Virgins , but judge ra-  
 ' ther, that they ought to be remo-  
 ' ved from other young Women, like  
 ' so many rotten sheep, that they  
 ' do not infect others by their cor-  
 ' ruption.

In vain do people plead here, that the Apostle , *i Cor. 12. 23.* allows us to bestow more abundant honor on those members of the Body, which we think to be less honourable, and therefore a homely Face may be trick'd up with suitable paints, and spots, and washes ; for not to mention that the Apostle by those members doth not mean the face and cheeks, but such as modesty bids us conceal ; The honour there spoken of, cannot be understood of paints and washes, for they are no Ornaments, but dis- simulations, and deceptions, and the honour that is allow'd to such uncomly parts is hiding of them from the

the sight of Men, which I suppose such vain persons will never practise on their Faces.

And what if the ingredients of such Fucus's be Gods Creatures, so is poison too and yet we see few persons so mad, as to make use of it so as to drink it, nor doth it signifie much, that persons may have a good end in all this, since we are not to do evil, that good may come out of it. It's granted, that natural beauty may provoke spectators to lust, and lascivious desires as well as artificial, yet from thence it follows not, that therefore the artificial ought to be allow'd of, as well as the natural, for there is not the same reason for the one that there is for the other; the natural, God bestows and cannot be blamed, nor did the person, that hath it, spend time and pains, and care to get it; the artificial as people cannot endeavour after it, but their corrupt minds and affections must prompt them to it; so it argues discontentedness with what

what God hath thought fit to give them, and an itching desire to deceive the unwary spectator. And suppose natural Beauty allures and tempts voluptuous Men, must therefore more evil be added to the former? must people therefore increase temptations with artificial Beauty? Is not the World bad enough? And must it be made worse? Must sin be therefore multiplied, and the sickly minds of carnal men, more and more distemper'd? Is it not enough that natural Beauty is so dangerous? and shall we encrease the danger by tricks and artifices?

St. Chrysostomes advice here is very seasonable; ‘Consi-  
 ‘der I beseech you, Sarah <sup>Homil. 31. in  
Matth.</sup>  
 ‘and Rebekah, and such  
 ‘Matrons, who have all undervalued  
 ‘this vanity, and Leah, though she  
 ‘was not handsome, nor so well be-  
 ‘loved as Rachel, yet used no art to  
 ‘make her so, but the lineaments,  
 ‘and features of her face remained as  
 ‘nature

' nature had disposed them, nor was  
 ' she at all concerned at her homeli-  
 ' ness, though educated by Parents  
 ' who were Pagans and Idolaters; and  
 ' shalt thou, whose head is Christ,  
 ' and who pretendest to be a Believer,  
 ' approve of these inventions of the  
 ' Devil? Doeſt not thou remember  
 ' the water that was sprinkled upon  
 ' thy face in Baptism, nor the Sacra-  
 ' ment whereby thy lips and tongue  
 ' were blessed? Didſt thou ſeriously  
 ' think of this, whatev'er fond desires  
 ' thou mightest naturally have after  
 ' ſuch dangerous Ornaments, thou  
 ' wouldſt not dare to fulfill them;  
 ' Remember, thou diſt vow to be  
 ' conformable to Christ Jesus, and  
 ' thou wilt hate this deformity, for  
 ' he delights not in these deceitful  
 ' colours, but requires a ſublimer  
 ' Beauty, even that of thy Soul and  
 ' Spirit; why ſhouldſt thou attempt  
 ' a thing ſo vain, ſo needless and  
 ' ſuperfluous? There is no defect in  
 ' any of Gods works, nor is there any  
     ' thing

thing that stands in need of thy making it better then it is ; none dares add any new stroaks to the Picture of a King, and if he dares, he smarts for it ; when thou darest add nothing to the workmanship of Man , art not thou afraid to make Gods work better then it is ? Doth not the fire of the burning lake come into thy mind, and dost not thou think how thy soul will one day be totally forsaken , whose concerns thou must needs neglect now while thou applyest all thy care and study and thoughts to thy body ? Why do I say, thou neglectest thy foul ; thy very body doth not enjoy what thou wishest for, which is evident from hence, because, while thou seekest to be handsome, thou doest really appear homely ; thou seekest by this to please thy Husband, whereas it cannot but be a grief to him, nor is it he only that blames thee, but others also do despise thee. Thou wouldest fain appear young , but thy

' thy very paint hastens old Age, and  
 ' whereas thou fanciest that this will  
 ' make thee look glorious, thou dost  
 ' but prepare for thy shame. But why  
 ' do I mention things of this nature,  
 ' while I forgoe the greater argu-  
 ' ments, as that thou offendest God,  
 ' underminest modesty, raisest jea-  
 ' lousie, and makest prostitute Wo-  
 ' men thy patterns. All which being  
 ' laid together, I beseech you dis-  
 ' pise these hellish Ornaments and  
 ' unprofitable arts, and renouncing  
 ' this formosity, or rather deformity,  
 ' learn to be ambitious of that Beau-  
 ' ty, which angels do desire, which  
 ' God is enamour'd with, and which  
 ' cannot but be pleasing to your  
 ' Husbands too, that having spent  
 ' and led your life honourably here,  
 ' you may attain at last to everlast-  
 ' ing Glory.

11. Delight in *Dancing* is another common Recreation, and though Dancing in it self, as it is an agility or motion of the Body, whereby

the

the body is preserved in health, and vigor cannot be said to be unlawful, no more than singing and exercising the tongue ( not to mention that agility of body is a gift of God, and it it be moved and exercised with observing time and measure, there is nothing in the word of God directly or indirectly against it) yet the manner and use, and the ends, and designs of it, make a very great difference in the lawfulness and unlawfulness of it.

That *David* Danced before the Ark of God, to testifie his joy, and exultation at so great a blessing, we read, *2 Sam. 6. 14.* and *Michals* despising him for it is noted as an errour, for which by a Divine judgment she was doom'd to be childless; *v. 23.* which shews, that God approv'd of that expression of his joy, and the Prophets of *Israel* permitted the Women to Sing, and Dance, and to answer one another, *Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands,*

O      sands,

sands, 1 Sam. 18. 6, 7. a custom  
 which in all probability they had  
 learned of *Miriam* the *Prophetess*,  
 the Sister of *Aaron*, who after the  
 victory over the *Ægyptians* took a  
 Timbrel in her hand, and all the  
 Women went out after her with  
 Timbrels, and with Dances, Exod.  
 15. 20. But then this Dancing was  
 still upon a Spiritual account, with  
 an intent to praise God, and to glo-  
 rifie him not only in their souls, but  
 bodies too; and besides, the Women  
 Danced by themselves, and the  
 Men by themselves without mix-  
 ing one with another, and only up-  
 on extraordinary occasions, when  
 Gods power and goodness was to be  
 Celebrated, and the younger sort  
 were to be encouraged to chearful  
*Hallelujah's*, which is an argument,  
 that Dancing out of wantonness, or  
 promiscuous Dancing, Men and Wo-  
 men Dancing together to please  
 spectators, and to divert themselves,  
 hath no warrant from the sacred Ora-  
 cles. This

This is the reason why mixt and lascivious Dancing hath been condemned, not only by the Primitive Fathers, but by almost all the Reformed Churches; nay the more serious sort of Papists look upon it as a thing intolerable among Christians. He that will not wilfully blind his eyes, must necessarily see, that this mixt Dancing had its original from the Heathens, who Worshipped their Gods by such extravagant motions, and there are not a few precepts in the Gospel, which forbid us to work *the will of the Gentiles, and to live in the Flesh*, to the lusts of Men, as St. Peter phrases it, 1 Pet. 4. 2, 3. And indeed he that will impartially consider the extent of that Chambering and wantonness, St. Paul speaks against, Rom. 13. 13. must confess, that this mixt Dancing, as it is usually practised, is comprehended under it. To any man that reads the Scripture with attention and soberness, it wil lappear very evident,

O 2 that

that nothing is pressed more by the Apostles, then gravity, modesty and great decency in our postures, actions, speeches, cloathing, and behaviour; and how this mixt and jovial Dancing, is agreeable to all this, no sober man can easily imagine.

That this mixt Dancing, though not necessarily, and naturally, yet for the most part through the vitiouſneſſ and corruption, that is in the generality of mankind, is an apparent occaſion of laſciviousneſſ, and levity, and impuret luſts, and an incentive to effeminateſſ, pride and vanity, is a thing past controverſie, and then ſure Christianity can give no encouragement to it. The uſual concomitants of this ſport are drinking, foolish, and frothy talk, and other immodest poſtures and actions, ſo that to plead for it, is to plead for an accumulation of fins, and enormities. And what doth this ſport betray but a weak, soft, easie, vain and empty mind? What ſnares are hereby

hereby laid for spectators to entertain evil, and dangerous thoughts, which too often hurry them on to impurer enterprizes, and when so many Councils, Synods, and wise, and learned men have apprehended the danger of it, writ against it, preached against it, made it their business to enquire into the nature of it, and upon examination of its tendencies, and consequences, have both publickly and privately represented it, as improper for Christians, and an enemy to that seriousness, which ought to be their essential character; it must be either pride or stupidity, that makes men stubborn or careless under such censures. And is it probable, that people who never studied the point or, at the best, survey'd, and look'd into it negligently, should be so well able to judge of it, as those who upon weighing what can be said for and against it, have at last concluded and infer'd the undecency, and unlawfulness of it.

The Romans when they were yet Heathens, counted Dancing a very dishonourable thing,

*Vid. P. Martyr.  
loc. com. class. 2.  
c. 11.*

and *Salust* tells us of *Sempronia*, that she was more than ordinarily vers'd in Singing and Dancing, which *saith he*, was more then became a grave and honest matron; To this purpose *Cicero* affirms of a good man, that rather then dance before spectators, he would lose a very considerable Legacy; it was laid to *Lucius Muræna's* charge, as a crime, that he had Danced when he was in *Asia*; and *Cicero* observes upon that passage, that no man sure would Dance, that was any way sober, it being the Quality of a Madman, and therefore among the errors, and misdemeanors he objects against *Anthony*, he brings in Dancing for one. These were the thoughts of the Heathen Sages, before the flood-gates of debauchery were open'd, and while *Rome* retain'd somewhat of her ancient

cient sobriety; and what witnesses will such Men be against Christians, who are taught to go beyond Heathens in gravity, and sobriety?

What if this mixt, and promiscuous Dancing, be not expressly forbid in Scripture, no more is the belief of Mahomet's riding upon his *Alborach* or white Steed to Heaven, no more is the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, and the *Mass*, and the Popes *Triple-Crown*, *Purgatory*, and the *Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary*; yet what serious Protestants will infer therefore, that these are lawful Doctrines and Positions? It's enough, that there are such lessons set down there, which any rational Man may easily conclude to be inconsistent with such recreations. It's enough that the Apostle forbids all those things which the Greeks call *καρποι*, which signifies Feasting mixt with Dancing, Gal. 5. 21. we translate the word *revelling*, but it includes the extravagant action of

mixt Dancing , whereby lusts and vanities are kindled, or encouraged in the minds of men, and he asserts that they that use such things or delight in them, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Nor will it avail here to say, that if any lascivious and impure desires be raised by this mixt Dancing, Men and Women one with another, that this is only by accident, the thing it self may be harmless enough, for in things of Morality , and where conscience is concern'd , we must not always take our measure by the nature of the thing, but very often by the humour and temper of sinful

P.Mart. loc. cit: Men, that make use of it, as the learned *Peter Martyr*

very well observes, for let's grant that here and there a sober Man may be found, who can with the greatest chastity of mind be both a spectator , and an actor of such promiscuous Dancings, but what becomes all this while

of

of the multitude, and of the greatest part of Men and Women, which are present at such sports, who cannot, will not keep within bounds, so that in this case we are not to respect what may possibly be done, but what for the most part uses to be done; In things of a moral nature, we must not go to the very edge of that which is lawful, but keep within a considerable distance of it, for the nearer we come to the utmost bounds, the nearer we approach to that, which is unlawful, which is the reason, why the Apostle bids us avoid the very appearance of evil, *1 Thess. 5. 22.*

I do not deny, but Men may do worse, but what necessity is there for their doing that which is bad, to avoid that which is worse? Must I therefore slander and abuse a Man, because it is a less sin then to murther him?

*I know*

I know such Doctrines are usually branded with the name of foolish preciseness, but sure I am, they are agreeable to that wisdom which is from above, and he that means to arrive to this wisdom, must of necessity become a fool, a fool in the eyes of the World, and that must be a Christians greatest glory ; for know ye not that the friendship of the World is enmity with God , whosoever therefore will be a friend of the World, is the enemy of God , Jam. 4. 4. upon which

*Summ. Part. 2.  
tit. 6. c. 6. §. 3.* words *Antoninus* thus paraphrases ; ‘ A friend of the World is he ‘ that loves the pomp , the lasciviousness , the pride and vain glory of the World , and he that ‘ will please Men in things of this ‘ nature, things usually found in promiscuous Dancings , becomes an ‘ enemy of God .

*Ludovicus Vives* tells us of some poor Indians , that were brought from the farther parts of Asia , who seeing

seeing some of our *Europeans* Dancing together, wonder'd what madness, and fury had possess'd them; indeed he that should stand upon a Hill afar of, without hearing any Musick, and see people skip about, and sometimes beat the Earth with their feet, sometimes lift themselves up into the Air, sometimes in such a posture, sometimes in another, could think no less, then that they were forsaken of their reason. I will not here alledge any examples of Men and Women, who have found by sad experience, what a sad Exit their Dancing and revelling hath had, how in the Ball, which *Lodowick* the design'd Arch-Bishop of *Magdeburg* gave his kindred and relations, the house fell upon the Dancers heads, and crush'd the *Burgher*-master and his friends to death, nor how that vertuous Virgin in *Famianus Strada* was ravished in a Ball.

*De Bell. Belg.*

I. I.

The misfortune that befell *John the Baptist*

Baptist through the jocular Dancing  
of *Herodias*, ought to fright de-  
vout persons from having any esteem  
and veneration for it; upon which

*Hom. 49. in Matth.* passage St. Chrysostom thus comments,

' Where there is La-  
' scivious Dancing, there the Devil  
' is always present; God hath not  
' given us feet for Dancing, but to  
' walk modestly, not to skip like  
' Camels, but that we might be fit  
' to stand one day in the Quire of  
' Angels; If the body be deformed,  
' or disfigured by such leaping, how  
' much more the soul? such Dances  
' make the Devil Dance, and this  
' way men are cheated by the Mi-  
' nisters of darkness. It were end-  
less to rehearse here, what Men of  
learning, and wisdom have said a-  
gainst this sport; one passage out

*De vanit. scient. c. 18.* of Cornelius Agrippa  
may serve for all ' No-  
' thing can be more  
' ridiculous then promiscuous Dan-  
' cing;

'ing; This lets loose the reins of  
 'wantonness, is a faithful friend to  
 'sin. the great incentive to uncleanness,  
 'an enemy to chastity, and a  
 'recreation unworthy of rational  
 'Men. Here many a matron hath  
 'lost her honour, here many a Virgin  
 'hath learned that which she had  
 'better been totally ignorant of;  
 'From hence many have come away  
 'worse then they were, but none  
 'better.

12. Delight in *seeing Stage-Plays*  
 must not be omitted here; and how  
 far this delight may be allow'd of,  
 and how far detested, I cannot shew  
 you better, then by giving you the  
 contents of a Letter, I formerly  
 writ to a young Gentleman upon this  
 Subject. .

S I R,

SIR,

' **T**Hough you did pitch upon  
 ' none of the best Casuists,  
 ' when you sent your case to me,  
 ' yet since you have thought fit to ask  
 ' my opinion, whether it be lawful  
 ' to go and see a Play, a thing, our  
 ' Gallants are so exceeding fond of,  
 ' I must crave leave to tell you, that  
 ' in the Primitive ages of the Church,  
 ' such a question from one who pro-  
 ' fessed himself a follower of the  
 ' Holy Jesus, would have been look-  
 ' ed upon with no very pleasant aspect,  
 ' they supposing that every Chri-  
 ' stian, who knew, or was sensible  
 ' into whose name he was Baptized,  
 ' understood, that things of this  
 ' nature, are as forrein to Christi-  
 ' anity, as lasciviousness and wan-  
 ' tonness, and as contrary to the  
 ' design of our noble Religion, which  
 ' is to plant a Spiritual Life in us,  
 ' as wallowing in voluptuousness or  
 ' luxury.

‘ But

' But the times are altered , and  
' our *Virtuosi* have allow'd of it , and  
' what men in former ages scarce  
' thought fit to be named among  
' Christians , this hath made not on-  
' ly convenient , but in some respect  
' necessary , and essential to a person  
' of Quality ; so that this Question  
' as the case stands , may with some  
' justice be askt , and even a very so-  
' ber person may now with some  
' reason demand , whether there be  
' any harm in beholding these dra-  
' matick representations ? And here I  
' would not be thought so rigid ,  
' or foolish rather , as if I believed  
' no representation of History , or  
' Mens actions in the World lawful ,  
' for that would be directly contra-  
' ry to Christs own practice , who  
' instituted a Sacrament to represent  
' his death , and passion by , and to  
' keep up the remembrance of it to  
' the Worlds end , and though this  
' is not acting things to the Life ,  
' yet it at least imports so much ,  
' that

'that something Historical may be  
'represented in lively and signifi-  
'cant Characters, the management  
'of which must be left to the pru-  
'dence and discretion of sober Men.

'But then these representations  
'must be restrain'd altogether to  
'virtue and goodness, and such ac-  
'complishments of the Soul, which  
'the wisest and holiest Men in all  
'ages have been desirous and ambi-  
'tious of, and though virtue cannot  
'be well either discoursed of, or re-  
'presented without its opposite vice,  
'yet such is the nature of vice, such  
'the unhappy consequences of it,  
'that if either the pleasure, or ease,  
'or prosperity and success of it be  
'shewn and acted, though but for  
'a few minutes, whatever Fate it ends  
'in, it's so agreeable to the corrupted  
'tempers of Men, that it leaves a  
'pleasing impression behind it; nor  
'is the after-clap or doleful *Exit* of  
'it strong enough, to prevent a  
'liking or satisfaction especially in  
the

the younger sort, who are generally more taken with its present content and titillations, than frightened with its dull and muddy conclusion; for while its present success, and sweetness is acting, the *Cupid* strikes the heart, and lays such a foundation there, as mocks all the death, and ruin, it after some time doth end in; I doubt not, but the joys of Angels, and the triumphs of glorified souls might be acted to the life; and great good might issue from the gaudy *Opera*, and if justice, patience, sobriety, humility, and contempt of the World with all the garlands, and solid joys that attend them, were represented with their future recompense, in a serious way, without jesting or raillery, not a few Men and Women might be signally edified by it, their affections raised above their ordinary level, and their courage kindled to press towards the noble prize; but then there must be nothing of

' the present amiableness of vice  
 ' mingled with the Scenes, for  
 ' though vice must almost necessarily  
 ' be named in these *Living Landships*,  
 ' yet it should be only named, and  
 ' never named but with horror,  
 ' and the generosity and gratitude of  
 ' virtue only acted to the life, for  
 ' indeed nothing is fit for action,  
 ' or imitated but virtue; vice should  
 ' never appear but in its ugly shape,  
 ' for if you dress it in its shining  
 ' Robes though it be but for a quar-  
 ' ter of an hour, such is the venom  
 ' of this *Basilisk*, it breaths a poison-  
 ' ous vapor both on the Actor, and  
 ' the Spectator, and while the one  
 ' comes to see sport, and the other  
 ' to get money, both go away from  
 ' the *Theater* worse then they came;  
 ' and though both come away laugh-  
 ' ing, yet both prepare for bitter  
 ' mourning and lamentation.

' I have shewn you what *Drama's*  
 ' may be useful and commendable,  
 ' but Sir, all this differs very much  
 ' from

from the modern plays, the aforesaid question relates to, these being things fitted for vanity, and luxury, for in these, though the punishment of vice, and rewards of virtue are represented to the life, yet it's done rather with advantage to the former, than to raise the credit of the latter, and the effect shews it, viz. the corruption and debauchery of youth, and persons of all sorts and sizes, which I shall more largely speak of in the sequel.

The Plays we speak of, are suited to the loose humour of the age, which seems to hate all things that are serious, as much as Rats-bane, and delights in nothing so much, as in jests and fooleries, and seeing the most venerable things turned into ridicule. Here no Play relishes but what is stuft with love tricks, and that which makes people laugh most, is the best written Comedy; wantonness is set out in its glittering

tering garb, and the melting ex-  
 pressions that drop from its lips,  
 are so charming to a carnal appetite,  
 that the young lad wishes himself  
 almost in the same passion, and in-  
 trigue of Love, he sees Acted on the  
 Stage, it looks so pleasant and ra-  
 vishing.

Here Religion is too often tra-  
 duced, and through the sides of Men  
 that differ from our Church, the  
 very foundation of Christianity is  
 shaken, and undermined; not but  
 that Hypocrisy in Religion ought  
 to be severely lash'd, but then it  
 must be done in a grave, becoming,  
 and serious way; such as Christ,  
 and his Apostles used against the  
 painted Sepulchres, the *Pharisees*.  
 The Stage hath that unhappy cha-  
 racter, that it is looked upon by  
 the generality, as the grand place  
 of diversion, Men come thither  
 not to learn, but to be merry,  
 and since acts of hypocrisy look  
 so very like acts of true Religion,  
 the

the danger is, that while you *raille*,  
 the counterfeit, you hurt the Ori-  
 ginal, and while you dress the Im-  
 age in a fools Coat, the substance  
 suffers in the ridiculous represen-  
 tation.

‘ So that here Men and Women  
 are insensibly poison’d, and the  
 good thing they see made awkward  
 in an enemy, in time looks but  
 odd and strange in a friend, and by  
 degrees the vertue is hated in good  
 earnest, because one that was in the  
 habit of an hypocrite, did practise  
 it:

‘ Here few sacred things are spared,  
 if they serve to make up the *De-*  
*corum* of the Act, and Heathenism  
 is reduced into Christian territories  
 in a pleasant way. The Pagan  
 Gods must make the *Drama* great,  
 and while these are in all the Actors  
 mouths, the licentious spectator in  
 time applies that to the true, which  
 the fond *Poet* ascribed to fictitious  
 Deities. Here the suprem Creator  
 is

is too often reviled through the ill  
 language that's given to Heathen  
*Numens*, and things that savour of  
 real piety rendered flat, insipid, and  
 impertinent ; here all, that may  
 raise the Flesh into action and de-  
 sire, is advanced, and whatever  
 serves to lay reason asleep, and to  
 exalt fancy and imagination, and  
 the glory of the World, is made the  
 proper object of admiration ; Here  
 all the wanton looks, and gestures,  
 and postures that be in the mode, are  
 practised according to art, and you  
 may remember, you have seen peo-  
 ple when dismiss from a Play, strive  
 and labour to get that grace and  
 antick meen, they saw in the mi-  
 mick on the Stage ; Here Men swear  
 and curse, and actually imprecate  
 themselves, and though they do it  
 under the name of the person they  
 act, yet their own tongue speaks  
 the sin, and their body is the agent  
 that commits it, and thus they  
 damn themselves for a Man in ima-  
 gination. And

10<sup>th</sup> And are these things fit for a Christian to behold! a Christian, who is to be a new Creature, a candidate of Eternity, an heir of Heaven, an enemy to the World, a spiritual Prince, a King over his lusts, and Emperor over his carnal desires? Is this a sight agreeable to the strait way, and the narrow gate, which leads to life? Can you or any man reconcile such darkness with light, such Idols with the Temple of God? Is there any thing in the Gospel more plainly forbid, than conforming to the World? and what can that prohibition import, if conformity to the World in beholding these dangerous sights be not in a great measure meant by it? We may put forced glosses upon the words, but doth not this look like the natural sense of them? 11<sup>th</sup> Holiness, for without it no man shall ever see the Lord, is the very character of men, who name the name of Christ, if they bear not that name.

' name in vain, and will any man of  
' sense be so bold, as to say, that  
' Shews, which have so much sin in  
' them, are suitable to that Holiness?

We know who said, Turn  
Ps. 119. 43. away mine eyes from be-  
ing continually holding vanity, and who  
sees not, that he who delights in  
such shews, neither dares pray that  
prayers, nor can have any desire to  
imitate David in his holiness, for  
he is pleased with vanity, fixes his  
eyes upon it, makes it the pleasing  
object of his sight, and consequent-  
ly instead of burning his eyes away  
from it, turns them to it, and would  
not forbear world lose that plea-  
sure. n. i. son. 1. alij alij auro. ensb  
and verbi oW. sci. id. t. mon. stud. sm  
and Is it thy right eye offend thee, pluck  
it out, and cast it from thee, for it  
is profitable for thee, that one of  
thy members should perish, and not  
that thy whole body should be cast  
into Hell, said he, who hath pro-  
tested, that not the least little or  
jota

'jota of his words shall perish, *Matth.*  
 '5. 29. If there be any sense in this  
 'passage, the meaning must necessa-  
 'rily be, that if the eye, or beholding  
 'an object, prove an occasion of  
 'evil, the eye must be so carefully,  
 'and so totally withdrawn from that  
 'object; as if it were actually pluck'd  
 'out, or were of no use in the body;  
 'what an occasion of evil the be-  
 'holding of such scurrilous shows  
 'is, none can judge so well as he  
 'who takes notice, how by these  
 'sights, the horror, which at-  
 'tended some sins, is taken off, and  
 'men are tempted to entertain a  
 'more favourable opinion of them;  
 'how apt upon these occasions they  
 'are to laugh at those sins which re-  
 'quire rivers of tears, and to smile  
 'at the jest they hear, which de-  
 'serves their most rigid censures;  
 'how natural is it to be affected with  
 'these representations? and is there  
 'in any thing of evil in them, how  
 'readily is it imbibed, or if not im-  
 'bibed

' bibed, yet excused, if not totally ex-  
 ' cused, yet qualified, and constru-  
 ' ed as a thing of no great hurt; and  
 ' thus its dreadfulnes abates, and it's  
 ' afterwards left out in the Cata-  
 ' logue of errors.

' God was either so jealous of his  
 ' own glory, or so tender of the spi-  
 ' ritual welfare of the Israelites, that  
 ' he should not suffer them to  
 ' a god <sup>Exod. 23. 13.</sup> take the names of the  
 ' Heathen Gods in their  
 ' mouths, nor suffer them familiarly  
 ' to mention them, for fear their  
 ' frequent naming of them should  
 ' lessen their awful apprehensions of  
 ' the Supreme Deity, or they be  
 ' tempted through that familiarity  
 ' to think, there was no great harm  
 ' in worshipping of them; this was  
 ' no ceremonial precept, nor judicial:  
 ' The substance is moral, and con-  
 ' sequently cannot be supposed to  
 ' be abolished by the death of Christ;  
 ' and since God would not permit it  
 ' to the Jews, how should he be  
 ' sup-

supposed to give leave to Christians,  
 of whom he requires greater strict-  
 ness, to be lavish in such expressi-  
 ons? How in our modern Plays in  
 most prayers, wishes, and impre-  
 cations the Heathen Deities are  
 brought in, I need not tell you,  
 The Actors indeed swear by God  
 in the singular number, but in their  
 entire *Harangues*, or witty senten-  
 ces or expressions, which they in-  
 tend shall move most, the Gods  
 are call'd in, and that's the grace of  
 their part; if it be said that this  
 is done out of a reverential respect  
 to the true God, who is too great  
 to be mention'd in such trivial  
 speeches; it's a marvellous thing,  
 they are not afraid to swear by  
 him, and to take his name in vain,  
 and though they mince their Oaths  
 sometimes, yet that doth not ex-  
 cuse the crime, as long as it shew's  
 their willingness to act it; but the  
 truth is, such men seek to turn  
 Religion again into Paganism, so  
 the

the style they use in their respective  
speeches about things above, is fit-  
ted for that purpose.

I know that it's commonly al-  
ledged, that the stories which are  
Acted, relate to transactions among  
the Gentiles, and that it would be  
incongruous to represent their acti-  
ons, and not to mention their Dei-  
ties, or to speak in their language ;  
but not to mention, that there is  
no necessity of representing passages  
of this nature, there being as  
noble things among Christians, that  
deserve remembrance, why cannot  
the virtues of Pagans be represent-  
ed without mentioning their Gods,  
or the sins and extravagancies of  
their Gods, whereby corrupted na-  
ture is so easily debauch'd into a  
mean opinion of the great Sovereign  
Being, and tempted to believe the  
powers above either subject to the  
same infirmities, that we are, or  
at least not much displeased with  
our irregularities here below. He  
said

that makes bold with false Gods,  
 does very easily slide into contempt  
 of the true , and while men are  
 brought in to dare the supposed Dei-  
 ties above, they'l be more ready  
 to affront him , that is *the same*  
*yesterday, to day, and for ever.* Not  
 will it follow, because Books that  
 treat of Heathen Gods may be read,  
 that therefore those Deities may  
 be Acted , and mentioned on the  
 Stage, for there is a great difference  
 between reading of a thing, and  
 seeing it acted with all the vanity  
 and boldness, that usually attends it.  
 In reading, a mans serious thoughts  
 are not dispersed or scattered, but  
 keep within the compass of mode-  
 sty, and weigh things in the ballance  
 of reason, whereas being Acted to  
 the life, they naturally strike vanity  
 into the mind, affect the sensual  
 part, drive away seriousness, and  
 leave an unhappy tincture behind  
 them.

“ And

‘ And if it be against the Divine  
 ‘ law, familiarly to mention or talk  
 ‘ of these fictitious Deities, it cannot  
 ‘ be very agreeable to the sense of  
 ‘ it, for Christians to go and hear  
 ‘ that idle talk, for as in other con-  
 ‘ cerns the receiver is as bad as the  
 ‘ thief, so he that with delight hears  
 ‘ that which another is forbid to  
 ‘ speak, makes himself accessory to  
 ‘ his sin, and draws needless guilt  
 ‘ upon his Soul.

‘ Flatter not your self, Sir, with a  
 ‘ fancy, that these Plays are no where  
 ‘ forbid in the Bible, and that there-  
 ‘ fore it may be lawful to see them,  
 ‘ for the word *νόσος*, *Revelling*, I men-  
 ‘ tioned before, and to which the  
 ‘ Apostle threatens exclusion from  
 ‘ the Kingdom of Heaven, Gal. 5.21.  
 ‘ and from which the word Comedy  
 ‘ in all probability is derived, though  
 ‘ I know others fetch it from ~~the~~ a  
 ‘ village, because in ancient times,  
 ‘ they did sing Songs about Country  
 ‘ Towns, I say this word includes all  
 ‘ such

such vain, lascivious, Ludicrous, and  
 Jocular representations, not only  
 Dancing and luxurious  
Vid. Gerh. Job.  
Voss. de Idol. 1. 2.  
c. 8.  
 Feasting, but wanton,  
 light and amorous In-  
 terludes and all that  
 belongs to the pampering and sa-  
 tisfyng of the Fleth, such as amo-  
 rous Songs, Complementing of  
 Mistresses, Love-tricks, and immo-  
 dest parts, and speeches, which make  
 the vainer sort of the company  
 merry, for the word is very com-  
 prehensive, and being so, one would  
 think should fright every serious  
 person from coming within the  
 guilt of that, which hath so severe  
 a threatening annex'd to it.

And is it worth losing Heaven,  
 and eternal happiness for the sight  
 of such jocular Shows? Are the  
 pleasures arising from hence, of that  
 consequence, that they will counter-  
 ballance so great a loss? Had you ra-  
 ther forfeit Gods favour, then these  
 ludicrous transactions? Are these  
 momen-

' momentary satisfactions of that  
 ' value, that you would run the ha-  
 ' zard of being for ever deprived of  
 ' the beatifick vision for them ? That  
 ' usual exception, that God will not  
 ' be so cruel, as to condemn Men for  
 ' such harmless sports, is of no weight at  
 ' all, for God hath no where declared,  
 ' that he will govern himself by Mens  
 ' fancies, but his eternal wisdom is  
 ' the rule he'l go by; if men will  
 ' have their pleasures , he hath  
 ' thought fit to forbid , they must  
 ' thank themselves, if they go with-  
 ' out his favour, and since they were  
 ' warned of this danger , they can  
 ' have no excuse, but are as the Apo-  
 ' stle speaks *αυτογάνειοι*, condemn'd  
 ' of themselves. *Tit. 3. 11.*

' Let's but consider the Nature,  
 ' scope and drift of our Religion ;  
 ' it commands us decency, modesty,  
 ' sobriety, vigilancy, or watchful-  
 ' ness over our thoughts, and words,  
 ' and actions, simplicity in the in-  
 ' ward, and outward man, redeeming  
     ' the

the time, employing the hours  
 God hath lent us, in profitable dis-  
 courses, and things useful and tend-  
 ing to edification. It bids us ab-  
 stain from fleshly lusts, which war  
 against the soul; it condemns all  
 Rioting, chambering, wantonness,  
 and making provision for the Flesh,  
 to fulfill the lusts thereof: It com-  
 mands us to walk after the Spirit,  
 to be heavenly minded, to have  
 the same mind and temper in us,  
 which was also in Christ Jesus, to  
 grow in grace, to advance in good-  
 ness, to grow strong in the Lord,  
 and in the power of his might;  
 it bids us stand up for the glory of  
 our God, and to be concern'd when  
 his Name, or Religion, or things  
 Sacred are abused; it bids us avoid  
 Scandal, and take heed we do not  
 by our example, either draw people  
 into errors, or confirm them in  
 their sins; it bids us take heed of  
 discouraging our neighbours from  
 goodness, and of laying a stumbling-

Q

block

' block in the way of weaker Christians ; it bids us exhort one another daily , and beware lest any of us be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin ; these are some of its principal rules, and I need not add, what our great Master hath told us, *ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you,* Joh. 15. 14. how these rules can be observed by persons that delight in these shews, I cannot apprehend ; is it modesty to be a hearer of that ribaldry and filthy communication, which some Plays are stuffed with ? Or to be a spectator of so many undecent and wanton gestures, postures, and actions , which in some Comedies make up the greatest part of the shew ? Is this sobriety, to stand by and hear men curse and swear, and talk of things which should not be so much as named among Christians ? Is this decency to afford your presence in a place, where the most debauched persons assemble themselves

' selves for ill ends and purposes?  
 ' Is this your fear of God to go and  
 ' hear the most solemn ordinances  
 ' of God *railed*, and undervalued, such  
 ' as marriage, and living up to the  
 ' strict rules of reason and conscience?  
 ' Is this your watchfulness over your  
 ' thoughts, and words, and actions,  
 ' to go and expose your selves to  
 ' temptations, to run into the De-  
 ' vils arms, and give him an oppor-  
 ' tunity to incline your heart to sin-  
 ' ful delights, and being pleased with  
 ' things which God abhors? Is this  
 ' that Godly simplicity, the Gospel  
 ' presses, to pay for your being af-  
 ' fected with the vain shews of this  
 ' sinful World, and to take liberty to  
 ' hear and see, what men of little or  
 ' no Religion shall think fit to re-  
 ' present to you? Is this redeeming  
 ' of your time to throw away so  
 ' many hours upon fooling, and see-  
 ' ing mens ridiculous postures, ge-  
 ' stures, and behaviours?

‘ Is not this making war against  
 ‘ your soul ? Is not this fighting a-  
 ‘ gainst your happiness ? Is this the  
 ‘ way to grow in grace, and to ad-  
 ‘ vance in goodness, and to abound  
 ‘ more and more in the love of God,  
 ‘ which your Christianity obliges  
 ‘ you to ? Is not this to clogg your  
 ‘ soul ? Is not this to throw impedi-  
 ‘ ments in her way to felicity ? Is  
 ‘ not this the way to make her ina-  
 ‘ mour’d with the World, from which  
 ‘ a Christian is to run away, as much  
 ‘ as he can ? By your Saviours rule  
 ‘ though you are in the World, yet  
 ‘ you are not to be of the World ;  
 ‘ These shows alienate other mens  
 ‘ affections from the best of objects,  
 ‘ and what security have you, that  
 ‘ they will not alienate yours ? Or  
 ‘ have you a peculiar exemption from  
 ‘ that danger ? If you have, shew us  
 ‘ your warrant, let’s see your patent ;  
 ‘ if you take the same way that pro-  
 ‘ fane persons take, to dull their Re-  
 ‘ ligious desires, how can it be other-  
     ‘ wise,

wise, but it will have the same effect in you? if you use the same means, why should not you fear the same unhappy influence? Why should you shut your eyes against a thing, as clear is the Sun? Do not you see, do not you perceive, how sin grows upon you by frequenting these places? Do not you find, how under these shows, the brutish part in you grows strong and vigorous, how the Flesh distends its plumes, grows easie and pleased, and in time engrosses all the nobler faculties of your Soul? As you are a Christian, you are to bring your Flesh into subjection, and to keep under your Body; and do not these shews signally help towards its power and dominion over the nobler part, and promote its Soverainty, and triumph over the reasonable appetite? what pampers it more then such sights? What feeds its posterous longings more then these? Do not these evidently make this

' slave usurp Authority over her  
 ' Mistress ? And is this fit to be done  
 ' by Christians, who are to crucifie  
 ' the Flesh with its lusts and af-  
 ' fections ?

' Who sees not, that these sights  
 ' are meer incentives to lust, and  
 ' fewel to feed the impurer fire in  
 ' our breasts ? And is this to walk af-  
 ' ter the Spirit, as we are command-  
 ' ed ? If they that walk after the  
 ' Flesh cannot please God, how can  
 ' you hope to please him, while you  
 ' allow your self in this work of the  
 ' Flesh ? Is this to promote a lively  
 ' sense of God ? Is the Stage likely to  
 ' produce vigorous apprehensions of  
 ' Gods grace and favour ? you know  
 ' it damps and obscures them, you  
 ' know it is an Enemy to them, you  
 ' know, it is the worm that hinders  
 ' your Spiritual growth, and yet will  
 ' you fancy a necessity to frequent  
 ' it ? Men may count it necessary to  
 ' be drunk, and to kill a person, they  
 ' do hate, but will this necessity hold  
 ' water

' water when the great Judge comes  
 ' to examine it ? The Flesh may  
 ' count that necessary, which reason  
 ' apprehends to be absurd , and im-  
 ' pious, and he that hearkens to the  
 ' dictates of the brute within him,  
 ' will call any thing necessary, though  
 ' never so contradictory to the Ora-  
 ' cles of Heaven, and the lessons of  
 ' our great Master *Jesus*? Is this to  
 ' have the same mind in you, which  
 ' was also in Christ Jesus; I hope  
 ' you do not question the duty, and  
 ' if you believe it incumbent upon  
 ' you, can you imagin, that in fre-  
 ' quenting the Stage, you imitate  
 ' his example ? Did he ever encou-  
 ' rage such empty things ? Is there  
 ' any thing in all the History of his  
 ' life, that may be said to coun-  
 ' tance such doings ? Could he ap-  
 ' plaud these follies, do you think,  
 ' whose life was a perfect pattern of  
 ' holiness, nay, are not all his precepts  
 ' levell'd against these scurrilities ?  
 ' Is it possible to live up to his pre-

Q 4      ' cepts,

' cepts and feed our eyes with these  
' Shews? Is it possible to be his  
' friend, and a friend to these vani-  
' ties? He whose life was a perpetual  
' selfdenial in the pleasures of this  
' life, could he give the least colour,  
' or shadow of approbation of them?  
' He who preached up the Doctrine  
' of the Cross, could he have any li-  
' king to that, which is directly con-  
' trary to that Doctrine? Would any  
' man that looks upon the jolly as-  
' sembly in a Play-house, think that  
' these are Disciples of the crucified  
' God? Do they not look like *Maho-*  
' *mets* Votaries, or *Epicurus* his Fol-  
' lowers? Would not one think that  
' they had never heard of the Cross,  
' and that whoever their Master was,  
' they were disciplined only to live  
' merrily: Would not one think that  
' these persons are very different in  
' their tempers from those Christi-  
' ans, the primitive Fathers do de-  
' scribe, who trampled on the World,  
' and were afraid of any thing that  
' favoured

' favoured of its satisfactions ? Would  
 ' not one think, that they are rather  
 ' disciples of some Heathen *Jupiter*, or  
 ' *Venus*, or *Flora*, or some such wan-  
 ' ton Minion, then of the grave,  
 ' the austere, and the serious *Jesus*,  
 ' for such he would have his follow-  
 ' ers to be, these he would have  
 ' tread in his steps ; these he would  
 ' have known by actions, and a be-  
 ' haviour like his own, and is a Play  
 ' likely to plant this noble temper in  
 ' you ? Is the sight of a Comedy a  
 ' probable means to make you live  
 ' above the World ? are the profane  
 ' *railleries*, that are used there, fit  
 ' preparatives for austerity of con-  
 ' versation ? Is this the way to pro-  
 ' mote gravity to visit the Stage,  
 ' where all gravity, is lookt upon, as  
 ' Pedantry, and traduced as a thing  
 ' proper only for old Usurers, and  
 ' Women who are past their sins and  
 ' vices ? Is this the way to advance  
 ' seriousness, to be much at places,  
 ' where seriousness is censured as a  
     ' trick

, trick of Divines, or at the best, as  
 ‘ an effect of vapours, and the na-  
 ‘ tural result of melancholy, and the  
 ‘ spleen ? As a Christian , you are to  
 ‘ shun the very appearances of evil, and  
 ‘ is this your obedience, to delight in  
 ‘ that which is evil , to applaud it  
 ‘ with your smiles, to commend it  
 ‘ with your tongue, and to encou-  
 ‘ rage it by your presence ?

‘ As a Christian, you are the *Salt*  
 ‘ *of the Earth*, and con-  
Matth. 5. 13. ‘ sequently are to pre-  
 ‘ serve your Neighbour from corrup-  
 ‘ tion ; and is this the way to preserve  
 ‘ him from infection, by your presence  
 ‘ in such places, and being as vain as  
 ‘ he, to encourage not only the actors  
 ‘ in their unlawful profession, but the  
 ‘ spectators too in their disobedience  
 ‘ to the Gospel? And what is this,  
 ‘ but to make your self a Proctor to  
 ‘ sin, to help people to be undone,  
 ‘ to assist them in going to Hell, and  
 ‘ to make your self accessory to their  
 ‘ folly.

‘ Are

‘ Are these the Christians, that are  
 ‘ to help one another to Heaven ?  
 ‘ Are these the Christians, that are  
 ‘ to go hand in hand together, to  
 ‘ Gods everlasting Kingdom ? Are  
 ‘ these the lights, the shining , the  
 ‘ burning lights, that are to light  
 ‘ the ignorant Brother to the inheri-  
 ‘ tance of the Saints in light ? Is not  
 ‘ this to be blind to the great design  
 ‘ of the Gospel ? And if the blind lead  
 ‘ the blind, shall not they both fall  
 ‘ into the pit ?

‘ *Wo to that man by whom the  
 offence cometh , it had been better  
 for him , that a Mill-stone were  
 hang'd about his neck , and he  
 drown'd in the midst of the Sea ,*  
 ‘ saith our great Master, Matth. 18.  
 ‘ 6. Does not this threatening fright  
 ‘ you ? Doth this put no sad thoughts  
 ‘ into your mind ? Do you believe  
 ‘ he spoke true ? And do not you think  
 ‘ you are concern'd ? What is your  
 ‘ going to a Play-house, but giving  
 ‘ Offence ? What is it but hardning  
 ‘ other

other men in their sins? Is not  
this tempting young people to those  
extravagancies they should detest?  
Is not this justifying the Players pro-  
fession, and to make them think  
that you approve of their ludicrous  
vocations? Their profession is in-  
famous by our Law, which looks  
upon them, as persons of no honest  
calling, and if you go to see their  
actings, and to see how they pro-  
stitute themselves, doth not this  
look like a commendation of their  
undertakings? And have not you  
sins enough of your own to answer  
for, but you must load other mens  
upon you too? Are you afraid, Gods  
anger to you will not be great e-  
nough, except you add your Neigh-  
bours offences, to make his wrath  
the heavier? All those persons of  
your acquaintance that go to a Play,  
because you do, are all Scandalized  
by your example; and is not this  
putting a stumbling-block in your  
Neighbours way, especially if peo-  
ple

ple believe that you have some  
 goodness in you, or have a name  
 that you are Religious, how bold  
 doth this make other persons to  
 venture on these vanities ? And how  
 dreadful must this make your ac-  
 count ? Either you do not think  
 much of another World, or if you  
 do, you cannot but conclude, that  
 these things will lie very heavy up-  
 on your conscience one day ? What  
 if you do not think it to be sin,  
 will your thinking so excuse you ?  
 Willful ignorance is as bad, as a  
 known sin, and how easily might  
 you know such doings to be sinful ?  
 But being unwilling to be better  
 informed, judge you, whether it  
 will not aggravate your Condemna-  
 tion ? how could the Primitive  
 Christians know these things to be  
 sinful ? And is not possible for you  
 to know it ? They had the Bible; so  
 have you : They had the same pre-  
 cepts that you have, only they did  
 not read the Scripture so super-  
 ficially

ficially, as perhaps you do, and  
 ‘ that was the reason why they  
 ‘ came to the knowledge of this sin,  
 ‘ while you halt betwixt two opini-  
 ‘ ons; Their affections did not hanker  
 ‘ and bend so much after the World  
 ‘ as perhaps yours do, and therefore  
 ‘ they might easily perceive *Christ's*  
 ‘ and the *Apostles* meaning, while  
 ‘ you, who dote too much upon these  
 ‘ outward things, have a cloud or mist  
 ‘ before your eyes, that you cannot  
 ‘ discern the sense of the Holy Ghost.

‘ Your present diversions may  
 ‘ hide the guilt from your sight, but  
 ‘ when the Summons of a terrible  
 ‘ God to appear at his bar, shall rouze  
 ‘ your Conscience one day, you'll be  
 ‘ of another mind;

‘ How? Did Christ come down  
 ‘ from Heaven, and die, and spill  
 ‘ his blood for you, that you might  
 ‘ securely indulge your carnal Ge-  
 ‘ nius? Did he sacrifice himself for  
 ‘ you, that you might please your  
 ‘ self with such fooleries? Hath he  
 ‘ appeas-

' appeased the Almightsies wrath for  
 ' you, that you might spend your  
 ' time in a Theatre ? Is this a proper  
 ' end of the mighty purchase he hath  
 ' made ? Did such phantastick actions  
 ' deserve so great a condescension ?  
 ' Is it likely that he would have  
 ' astonish'd all the Angels of Heaven  
 ' with his descent into this valley of  
 ' tears, if this security in carnal sa-  
 ' tisfactions had been his design ?  
 ' One would rather think, that so  
 ' deep a humiliation called for the  
 ' greatest severities, and was shewn  
 ' on purpose to engage poor mor-  
 ' tal s to the profoundest acknow-  
 ' ledgments of his favour ; One  
 ' would think, that such miracles of  
 ' charity challenged a most serious  
 ' behaviour, and that after this men  
 ' should not dare to think of trivial  
 ' and impertinent things ; This is  
 ' more likely to be the end of his  
 ' Incarnation, and Suffering, than the  
 ' other. To delight in such vanities  
 ' is a disparagement to his love, a  
     ' blemish

' blemish to his charity, a disgrace  
 ' to his condescension, and an un-  
 ' dervaluing of so great a mercy;  
 ' And do you thus reward him? Do  
 ' you thus requite his kindness? Is  
 ' this the return you make him for  
 ' his sweat and agonies, for his sighs  
 ' and groans, for his pains and all  
 ' his labours? Did he bleed, that you  
 ' might grow strong in sin? Did he  
 ' die, that you might cherish the lusts  
 ' of the Flesh? Did he make himself  
 ' of no reputation, that you might  
 ' please your self with divertisements,  
 ' invented only to affront him and  
 ' to render his endeavours to con-  
 ' vert our souls ineffectual.

' Have not you observed it? Have  
 ' not you taken notice, how men and  
 ' women, who have had some zeal  
 ' for Religion, and very pious incli-  
 ' nations, how that zeal hath decreas'd  
 ' upon their frequenting of these  
 ' Houses, how their goodness hath  
 ' decay'd, how flat they are grown  
 ' in Devotion, how weak in their

‘ Holy

‘ holy performances ? how dull in  
 the work of meditation ? how slo-  
 venly and superficial in God’s ser-  
 vice ? may be, they have kept up  
 ‘ some outward shews, some exter-  
 ‘ nal formality, some earnestness for  
 ‘ the fringes of Religion, or for the  
 ‘ ceremonial part of Christianity ;  
 ‘ But have not you seen, how they  
 ‘ are become strangers to that life,  
 ‘ which must adorn it, to that con-  
 ‘ templation of good things , they  
 ‘ formerly delighted in, to that strict-  
 ‘ ness they once professed ? Have not  
 ‘ you seen how they have remitted  
 ‘ in their warmth, and how the holy  
 ‘ fire that once burn’d in their breasts  
 ‘ is gone out ? And is your Christi-  
 ‘ anity so fierce and violent, that it  
 ‘ needs a bridle ? Is it so hot, that it  
 ‘ must have an extinguisher ? Is it  
 ‘ so flaming that it wants this stolen  
 ‘ water to quench it ?

‘ With what face dare you approach  
 ‘ the Table of your Lord, who have  
 ‘ been a spectator of such shews but

' a little before ? With what eyes can  
' you appear in the presence of that  
' King of Kings, who have but a  
' little before prostituted your Soul  
' to the Devil ? With what consci-  
' ence can you promise the Lord *Jesus*  
' to follow him, when you intend to  
' expose yourself again to these temp-  
' tations ? Do not you blush to think,  
' how you serve both God and *Mam-*  
' *mon, Christ*, and the World, con-  
' trary to your Redeemers protesta-  
' tion, that you cannot serve two Ma-  
' sters ? If you come to the Lords  
' Table one day, and run to a Play-  
' house another, do not you destroy  
' all, that you built the day before ?  
' If you come to the Supper of the  
' Lord, there to profess your sorrow  
' for loving the World, are you in  
' good earnest sorry for it, or are  
' you not ? If not, why do you play  
' the hypocrite, or do you think to  
' put a cheat upon the Almighty, as  
' if he did not see your heart, or  
' would be taken with shew, and  
' pomp ?

' pomp? If you are, how can you  
 ' run into the same temptation again,  
 ' or go to a place where you will  
 ' infallibly be tempted to the love  
 ' of the World? Is not this to shut  
 ' the gates of mercy against you?  
 ' Is not this to make your self odious  
 ' to that God whose favour you ex-  
 ' pect in the last day? Is not this to  
 ' live in contradictions? In this Sa-  
 ' crament you profess to imitate your  
 ' Lord in despising the World, and is  
 ' this imitation, to go one day into  
 ' the house of God, and the next in-  
 ' to a den of Thieves; for so the  
 ' Stage may justly be called, where  
 ' men are robb'd of their relish of  
 ' spiritual objects.

' Whence hath come that Atheism,  
 ' that looseness, that indifference in  
 ' things Divine, that low esteem  
 ' of the tremendous mysteries of  
 ' Christianity, which of late like a  
 ' Land-flood hath over-run us?  
 ' Have they not deriv'd their bold-  
 ' ness from these places? Have not

the vices represented there in jest,  
 been practised by the forward youth  
 at home in good earnest? And can a  
 Christian have a good opinion of  
 these houses, where so many have lost  
 their virtue? Can any man of rea-  
 son think, that after all this mischief,  
 they may be safely hugg'd and ap-  
 plauded? Those many notorious  
 Fornications and Adulteries we have  
 heard, and know of, those bare-  
 faced cheats, mens boastings of their  
 sins, and glorying in their shame,  
 their impudence, their courage to  
 do evil, their daring to do things  
 which sober Heathens have de-  
 test'd, whence have they come in  
 a great measure, but from these  
 poison'd fountains? Why should  
 we be afraid to call a spade, a spade?  
 Do not even wicked men confess so  
 much, men who have been guilty of  
 such crimes? Shall men of no great  
 sense of Religion complain of it, and  
 shall a Christian do any thing, that  
 may contribute toward the holding  
 of them up?                             If

' If wanton, lustful,  
 ' and obscene jests are *Ephes. 5. 4.*  
 ' expressly forbid by the  
 ' great Apostle, nay, are not so much  
 ' as to be named among Christians,  
 ' how can a man that makes profes-  
 ' sion of that Religion, hear them,  
 ' or be taken with them, when Gods  
 ' name is profaned in such houses?  
 ' when Religion is mock'd? when ver-  
 ' tue is rendred odious? how can you  
 ' hear it without reproving the men  
 ' that do it? how can you have pa-  
 ' tience to let them talk at this rate?  
 ' you are bound by your profession  
 ' to rebuke your neighbour for noto-  
 ' rious sins, and not to suffer iniquity  
 ' upon him; can you hear these  
 ' things, and see men affront their  
 ' maker, and be possess'd with a  
 ' dumb Devil? How can you dis-  
 ' charge your conscience, to let your  
 ' neighbour do evil without giving  
 ' him an Item of Gods displeasure?  
 ' If we are to exhort one another to  
 ' take heed, lest any of us be har-

' den'd through the deceitfulness of  
 ' sin, how can you see men harden  
 ' themselves in their sins on the Stage,  
 ' without a fraternal admonition ? If  
 ' you have no courage to admonish  
 ' them, what makes you appear there  
 ' where you must be silent under the  
 ' indignities offered to your Master ?  
 ' Had you a Friend, whom you lov-  
 ' ed, and saw his concerns in danger,  
 ' his reputation attack'd, his credit  
 ' torn, his good name wounded,  
 ' would not you stand up in his vin-  
 ' dication ? You own Christ for your  
 ' Friend, and profess you love him,  
 ' and can you see his laws trampled  
 ' on, and his blood and wounds made  
 ' a complement of Speech, and not  
 ' be moved at it ? or if you have some  
 ' little regret upon your spirits, where  
 ' is your tongue to speak for your  
 ' friend ? Do you think such men are  
 ' like to be his favorites ? and is not  
 ' this to fall under the lash of that  
 Mar. 8. 38.      threatening, Whosoever  
                       shall be ashamed of  
                       me

' me and of my Gospel, in this adulterous, and sinful Generation, of him  
 ' shall the son of man be ashamed, when  
 ' he comes in the glory of his Father ;  
 ' since you have not spirit enough  
 ' to reprove such sinners, why do  
 ' not you stay away? why do not  
 ' you keep out of their company ?  
 ' you are obliged to do either one or  
 ' the other, if you cherish any  
 ' hopes of salvation, and since to re-  
 ' prove them you are ashamed, staying  
 ' away must necessarily be your duty.  
 ' Do you ever examine your self  
 ' at night about the actions of the  
 ' day ? and if you do, doth not your  
 ' presence at such shews, and your  
 ' being pleased with them, fly into  
 ' your face ? Do not you think, what  
 ' have I done to day ? how did I spend  
 ' my time, might not I have spent it  
 ' better, then at a Play-house ? How  
 ' many persons have I hardened, and  
 ' confirm'd in their sins by my ex-  
 ' ample ? How much lightness and va-  
 ' nity have I encouraged by my pre-  
 ' sence ?

' sence ? bath not such a sin been plea-  
 ' sing to me ? Have not I been delight-  
 ' ed with seeing my neighbour abus'd ?  
 ' have not I been tickled with mens  
 ' speaking ill of him ? had God strack  
 ' me dead in that place , how sad  
 ' would my condition have been ? how  
 ' many vain and foolish thoughts have  
 ' these sights sent into my mind ? If  
 ' you examine your self in this man-  
 ' ner and find these effects , have not  
 ' you reason to ask God forgiveness ?  
 ' and if you ask him forgiveness , how  
 ' dare you run upon the same rock  
 ' again ? will you sin willfully after  
 ' this ? will you sin against your  
 ' knowledge , will you do that again ,  
 ' which will require a new repen-  
 ' tance ? what is this but a mock-re-  
 ' pentance , to go on in a circle of  
 ' confessing , and finning , of sinning ,  
 ' and confessing .

' But I doubt , this self-examination  
 ' is a thing you do not trouble your  
 ' head with , and you shun it , as men  
 ' do their creditors that dun them ;  
 ' you

' you are afraid it will fill your head  
 ' with scruples, and therefore avoid  
 ' it, as those who are unwilling to  
 ' look into their accounts, that they  
 ' may not be surpriz'd with the sum  
 ' they owe; if visiting the Stage makes  
 ' you neglect this self-examination, it  
 ' makes you neglect a known duty;  
 ' and if so, it must be sinful, and if sin-  
 ' ful, how dare you meddle with it?

Do but take a view of the writ-  
 ' ings of the Primitive Fathers, and  
 ' you'll find them unanimous in  
 ' this assertion, that in our Baptism,  
 ' when we renounce the Devil and  
 ' his works, and the pomp and glory  
 ' of the World, we do particularly re-  
 ' nounce Stage-Plays, and such ludi-  
 ' crous representations. They that liv-  
 ' ed nearest to the Apostolical times,  
 ' in all probability knew, what was  
 ' meant by this renunciation, and  
 ' this they profess to be the sense  
 ' of it, this they assure us is meant  
 ' by those pomps, and glories, and  
 ' why should we presume to put a  
new

' new sense upon that vow? They received this interpretation from the Apostles, and propagated it to posterity, and in their sense we make this Abjuration.

*Sir, have you abjured these things in your Baptism, and dare you venter on them? have you renounced them, and dare you fall in love with them? Have you protested in the presence of God and Angels, that you will not meddle twith them, and will by you break your vow? Have you solemnly professed before the Congregation, that you will not have any affection for them; and do you make no such thing of perfidiousness? How darest thou come into this O Christian run into a Play-house after Baptism, saith Salvian, when thou hast confessed those very plays to be the works of the Devil? Thou hast renounced the Devil and these Stage Plays, so that if thou willingly and wittingly fre-*

*quentest*

*Salvian. ac gubern. Dei. lib. 6.*

' quentest them, it's evident that thou  
 ' returnest to the Devil too, for thou  
 ' hast renounced both, and hast professed  
 ' both to be one, so that if thou re-  
 ' turn to one, thou returnest to both.

' I know what is commonly ob-  
 ' jected, that the reason why the Fa-  
 ' thers are so much against Christi-  
 ' ans seeing of a Play, was, because  
 ' the heathenish idolatries were acted  
 ' to the life upon the Stage, and that  
 ' proselites might not be in danger  
 ' of being enticed to idolatry, was  
 ' the great motive, why they in-  
 ' veigh'd so much against sights of  
 ' that nature; but those that use this  
 ' plea, most certainly have not read  
 ' the Fathers, or if they have read  
 ' them, have not considered all their  
 ' arguments; for to go no farther  
 ' than *Tertullian*, after he had in  
 ' had condemn'd these <sup>Tertul. de  
spet.</sup> sights, for the idolatries  
 ' committed on the Stage, he pro-  
 ' duces other reasons for which they  
 ' are utterly unlawful; as i. Because  
 ' the

the spirit of the Gospel, is a spirit  
of gentleness, but the actors are  
forced to put themselves into a

c. 15. posture of wrath and anger,

and fury, and the spectators  
themselves cannot behold them  
without being put into a passion.

c. 15. 2. Because vanity, which is  
proper to the Stage, is al-  
together foreign to Christianity:

c. 15. 3. Because we are not to  
consent to peoples sins. 4.

c. 16. 4. Because men are abused in  
these places, and neither  
Princes nor People spared, and this  
being unlawful elsewhere, must be  
unlawful too upon the Stage. 5.

c. 17. 5. Because all immodesty and  
scurrility is forbid by the  
Law of the Gospel, not only acting  
of it, but seeing and hearing it Acted.

c. 23. 6. Because all Players are  
hypocrites, seem to be what  
they are not, and all hypocrisy  
is condemn'd by the Gospel.

c. 23. 7. Because the Actors very  
often

often belie their Sex, and put on  
 womens apparel, which is forbid,  
 by the law of God. 8. Be-  
 cause these plays dull and  
 damp devotion, and seriousness,  
 which is and ought to be the in-  
 deleble character of Christians. 9.  
 Because it is a disparagement  
 to God to lift up those  
 hands to applaud a Player, which  
 we use to lift up to the Throne of  
 grace. 10. Because expe-  
 rience shews, how the De-  
 vil hath sometimes possess'd Chri-  
 stians in a Play-house, and being after-  
 wards cast out, confess, that he  
 had reason to enter into them, be-  
 cause he found them in his own  
 place. 11. Because no man  
 can serve two Masters, God  
 and the World, as those Christians  
 pretend to do, that frequent both  
 the Church and the Stage. 12. Be-  
 cause though some speeches  
 in a Play are witty and in-  
 genious, yet there is poison at the  
     bottom,

c. 25.

c. 26.

c. 26.

c. 27.

' bottom, and vice is only coloured,  
 ' and guilded with fine language,  
 ' and curious emblems, that it may  
 ' go down more glib, and ruin the  
 ' soul more artificially.

' These are some of *Tertullians*  
 ' Arguments, and he that shall at-  
 ' tentively consider them will easily  
 ' find that they are not only applicable  
 ' to such Comedies where idolatry  
 ' is Acted, but to those of this age,  
 ' where scurrility, vanity, and im-  
 ' modesty, and other vices are in-  
 ' couraged; and whereas some pre-  
 ' tended, that if they saw no Plays,  
 ' they should want sport, and be with-  
 ' out necessary recreation, the learn-  
 ' ed Presbyter doth very handsomly

c. 29.     'reply; *Why art thou so abo-*  
           'minably ungrateful, to com-  
           'plain of want of recreation, when God  
           'bath given thee such great variety of  
           'pleasures? for what can be more plea-  
           'sant, then to be reconciled to God  
           'the Father, and the knowledge of  
           'the truth, our deliverance from  
           'dark-

'darkness, and error, and a free par-  
 'don of all our sins? what greater  
 'pleasure can there be, then the loath-  
 'ing of carnal pleasure, contempt of  
 'the World, true Christian liberty,  
 'a conscience void of offence, a spot-  
 'less life, freedom from the fear of  
 'death, trampling on the Heathen  
 'Gods, expulsion of Devils, the gift  
 'of healing; prayer for illumination,  
 'and living to Gods glory? These are  
 'the pleasures, these are the Plays  
 'of Christians, holy, free, and perpe-  
 'tual; in such things as these, fancy  
 'thou seest a Play, here see the course  
 'of the World, behold the gliding  
 'time, view the distance betwixt this  
 'life and eternity, expect the con-  
 'summation of all things, defend the  
 'Church, rouze thy self at Gods sig-  
 'nal, listen to the Arch-angels trum-  
 'pet, glory in the Martyrs laurells;  
 'If learning and knowledge do delight  
 'thee, behold in the Scripture there  
 'are verses enough, witty sentences  
 'enough, songs enough, and voices  
 'enough

‘enough ; no fables of Poets, but so-  
 ‘lid truths ; no sophistry, but majestick  
 ‘simplicity; wouldst thou see Gladiators  
 ‘and wrestlers, here thou hast them,  
 ‘here thou mayst see lasciviousness o-  
 ‘vercome by chastity, perjury by faith-  
 ‘fulness, cruelty by mercy, wanton-  
 ‘ness by modesty, and these are our  
 ‘Olympick games, in which he is  
 ‘Crown’d that strives for mastery ;  
 ‘Dost thou love to see blood drawn  
 ‘in a publick shew ? Behold thou hast  
 ‘the blood of Jesus ; and what a  
 ‘noble sight will shortly appear to  
 ‘our eyes, even the coming of our glo-  
 ‘rious Lord, the exultation of An-  
 ‘gels, the Resurrection of his holy  
 ‘ones, the stately Kingdom of believing  
 ‘Souls, and the sight of the new Je-  
 ‘rusalem ! There is another shew be-  
 ‘hind, even the last day of Judgment,  
 ‘a day unlook’d for, a day despised  
 ‘by fools, a day wherein the old world  
 ‘will be swallowed up of fire ! How  
 ‘glorious a sight will that be, when I  
 ‘shall behold with astonishment, and  
     ‘joy,

joy, so many Kings, whom their flat-  
 terers placed among the Stars; sigh-  
 ing in outward darkness with Jupi-  
 ter, and their parasites? So many  
 Persecutors of the Christian name  
 melting in insulting flames! So many  
 Philosophers with their Disciples,  
 who gave out, that God was careless  
 of the affairs of this lower World,  
 trembling before Christs Tribunal!  
 At that time I shall know Tragœdi-  
 ans by their loud cry in misery, Stage-  
 players by their being tormented  
 by fire more than other men, the  
 Charioteers in the publick Games, by  
 their being red upon a flaming wheel,  
 and the Mimick by his being tossed in  
 sheets of fire. Thus far that excellent  
 man; whom St. Cyprian exactly imi-  
 tates. And certainly he that hath the  
 same sense of Religion, that he had,  
 cannot but be of the same opinion. So  
 that it is for want of searching, and  
 diving into the Nature of Christiani-  
 ty, and what is more, for want of feel-  
 ing the power of Religion, that

S. makes

' makes men speak in vindication of  
' Plays, and interludes.

‘ What a pittifull shifit is it to say,  
‘ that great good may be gained by  
‘ them, when it is plain that the evil  
‘ which ensues upon them, doth sig-  
‘ nally preponderate, and outweigh  
‘ the pretended benefit? What if a  
‘ moral saying or a witty sentence, or  
‘ an ingenious Apophthegm lie scat-  
‘ tered here and there among the rub-  
‘ bish, will that grain of goodness  
‘ counterballance a whole talent of  
‘ ill, that’s seen there, or got by see-  
‘ ing it, some have been so vain, as  
‘ to give out, that they may learn as  
‘ much by a Play, as by a Sermon;  
‘ but not to mention, that such per-  
‘ sons spiritual appetite is extremely  
‘ vitiated, while they continue in  
‘ this opinion, they’l never be much  
‘ edified, either by a Play, or a Ser-  
‘ mon, and till they have a nobler  
‘ opinion of Gods Ordinance, it’s just  
‘ with God to suffer the Devil to lead  
‘ them Captive at his will. And  
‘ what

' what are the mighty advantages,  
 ' men get by the representations of  
 ' the Stage? May be they learn to  
 ' court a Mistress well, or the  
 ' vanities they see there, serve them  
 ' to maintain a loose discourse, or it  
 ' enables them to make the company  
 ' merry, but are these things that  
 ' tend to reformation of life, and  
 ' manners? Who ever learned to aban-  
 ' don a sin, he is addicted to, by see-  
 ' ing its punishment on the Stage?  
 ' Or who ever thought himself obli-  
 ' ged to practise that vertue, which he  
 ' sees Acted on the *Theater*, except  
 ' it be, to resent an affront that's of-  
 ' fer'd him, and to know how to  
 ' maintain the punctilio's of honour,  
 ' and bravery? And are these Christi-  
 ' an vertues? Are these the graces  
 ' that must make us glorious in the  
 ' sight of God? such arguments are  
 ' signs of a desperate caule, and tacit  
 ' accusations of the illness of the  
 ' thing, since the aprons that cover  
 ' it are made of Figg-leaves.

S 2      ' And

‘ And what if some Plays be more  
‘ innocent and not so profane, as  
‘ others , if I go to one, doth not  
‘ my example encourage men to go  
‘ and see those, which are more loose  
‘ and wanton ? If I mean to discourage  
‘ sin in others by my actions, I must  
‘ not give them occasion to do that  
‘ which is evil : Sensual Men distin-  
‘ guish not betwixt the more harm-  
‘ less, and the more hurtful, and if  
‘ I encourage the one by my pre-  
‘ sence, I encourage the other too ,  
‘ and if by my example I approve of  
‘ the Players profession in one thing,  
‘ I approve of it in another too, and  
‘ harden them in their folly ; not to  
‘ mention, that my seeing the more  
‘ harmless , as I call them , will in  
‘ time intice me to see the more pro-  
‘ fane , for sin is catching, and one  
‘ vanity draws on another, and from  
‘ the lesser we run to greater , and  
‘ when the horrour of sin is once  
‘ abated in our minds , the things  
‘ which are most contrary to Chri-  
‘ stianity ,

‘ stianity, begin to appear harmless,  
‘ and thus the Soul glides insensibly  
‘ into darkness, and eternal misery.

‘ That which you use to pretend  
‘ sometimes, that there are *Divines*  
‘ of the *Church of England*, who ap-  
‘ prove of these shews, hath nothing of  
‘ validity in it; for suppose there were  
‘ some, who allow of these vanities,  
‘ doth it therefore follow, that the  
‘ *Church of England* doth encourage  
‘ them? The opinions of some Di-  
‘ vines, are not the standard of our  
‘ Church, nor are the private sen-  
‘ timents of a few men prescriptions  
‘ for her to go by.

‘ The *Church of England* hath no  
‘ where declared so much, and as  
‘ long as the Church is silent, it’s  
‘ presumption to interpret the fond  
‘ opinions of some men, as her Rule  
‘ and Doctrine. How can our Church  
‘ countenance such things, that profes-  
‘ ses strict adherence to the Word of  
‘ God, and looks upon the judgments  
‘ of men, that are contrary to it, as

‘ *Heterodox and Erroneous?* At this  
 ‘ rate you might as well argue, that  
 ‘ because some Divines have been seen  
 ‘ at a Play, that therefore they have  
 ‘ encouragement from the Doctrine  
 ‘ of our Church. The Doctrine of  
 ‘ a Church is one thing, and the  
 ‘ practice of some of her pretended  
 ‘ members is another. The Churches  
 ‘ case would be very hard, if she  
 ‘ were to answer for all the misde-  
 ‘ meanours of her seeming Votaries;  
 ‘ and who knows not, how in all  
 ‘ Churches the professors generally  
 ‘ deviate from the rules that are ex-  
 ‘ tant in their Books and Canons.

‘ But after all, it’s worth enquiring,  
 ‘ whether those Divines you speak  
 ‘ of, be of the graver, or the young-  
 ‘ er sort; that some young men who  
 ‘ want experience, and perhaps a  
 ‘ lively sense of Religion, should be  
 ‘ taken with these shews, I do not  
 ‘ wonder; but who takes raw youths,  
 ‘ and such as think any thing great,  
 ‘ and good, that’s witty, and serves  
     ‘ to

' to tickle the fancy , who takes such  
 ' men for judges in an affair of this  
 ' importance ? As to the graver sort,  
 ' I doubt you 'l find none, or but ve-  
 ' ry few, that are favourers of these  
 ' spectacles, or if they do declare at  
 ' any time, that if Plays were re-  
 ' duced to their true *decorum*, they  
 ' might be inoffensive , from hence  
 ' it will not follow, that they coun-  
 ' tenance the common *Tragedies*  
 ' and *Comedies*, which so manifestly  
 ' go beyond the limits of decency .

' And what if you do go but now  
 ' and then, Doth your going but sel-  
 ' dom justify the action ? All that  
 ' this excuse will amount to, is only  
 ' this, that you do not sin so often,  
 ' as other men , but doth this free  
 ' you from the guilt, or make you  
 ' innocent in the sight of God ? How  
 ' would you take it, if a man should  
 ' give you a box on the ear but now  
 ' and then ? Or how would you re-  
 ' sent it , to have your good name  
 taken away by a person, not al-

' ways, but whenever his humour  
 ' prompts him? And from hence you  
 ' may easily guess at the weakness of  
 ' this exception, and if you have  
 ' that mean opinion of God, that  
 ' low esteem of his greatness, as to  
 ' think, that to affront him but now  
 ' & then can do no harm, you are un-  
 ' worthy to be his Disciple, and judge  
 ' your self unworthy of Eternal life.

' But I am forced to go, you say,  
 ' my Superiors command me to wait  
 ' upon them to a Play, and how can  
 ' I refuse it, except I will lose their  
 ' favour, and the Place I hold under  
 ' them? And is this such a bug-bear  
 ' to fright you from your duty? To  
 ' whom have you greater obligations,  
 ' to God or Man? If to God, why dare  
 ' not you prefer his favour before the  
 ' favour of Men, and be guided more  
 ' by his Laws, then by the benevo-  
 ' lence of dust and ashes? Have not  
 ' you courage to make a vow, and  
 ' when you are solicited by your Su-  
 ' periors to go, cannot you speak  
 ' out,

' out, and tell them, that you lie  
 ' under the obligation of a vow not  
 ' to go, and who will be so profane, as  
 ' to desire you to break it? Had you  
 ' rather sin, then displease Men, or  
 ' is a poor Creature more terrible to  
 ' you, then he who thunders in the  
 ' Heavens? If you are persuaded in  
 ' your conscience, that to be present  
 ' at these shews is sinful, shall a crea-  
 ' tures smiles make you venture the  
 ' displeasure of the most High? And  
 ' what if you lose something consi-  
 ' derable by pleasing God? Hath God  
 ' no ways to make you amends for  
 ' your losses? Hath he no Glory, no  
 ' Kingdom, no reward, no recom-  
 ' pence to redintegrate your fortune?  
 ' If you lose this World for his sake,  
 ' is not the felicity of the next re-  
 ' compence enough? But why should  
 ' you mistrust him even in this pre-  
 ' sent life? He that made *Moses* af-  
 ' ter he had left the Court of *Egypt*,  
 ' General of his own Army and ad-  
 ' vanced *Joseph*, who hated to be  
     ' great

great and rich by sin, to be *Viceroy*  
 of the *Realm*, and preserved *Daniel*  
 in his grandeur for this reason, be-  
 cause he would not depart from his  
 conscientiousness; is his arm short-  
 ned or is his strength abated, that  
 he can do nothing equivalent to all  
 this? Are not the hearts of men  
 in his hand, and doth not he turn  
 them as streams of Water? How  
 often doth he make it appear to the  
 World, that where a mans ways  
 please the Lord, he makes his very  
 enemies to be at peace with him?  
 Nay how often do these generous  
 selfdenials work by Gods providence  
 upon Superiours, and they that at  
 first sollicited a man to do that which  
 was vain, and contrary to the Laws  
 of Religion, when they see him re-  
 solute in his conscientiousness, how  
 often have they been persuaded to  
 reflect upon themselves, at least to  
 have a better opinion of the person,  
 who fears God more then them?

‘ What

‘ What you have often told me,  
 ‘ that from this way of reasoning  
 ‘ it would follow, that it is unlawful  
 ‘ to write or to read a Play, will  
 ‘ deserve some consideration: As for  
 ‘ the writing of it, though Poetry  
 ‘ be a thing lawful and commenda-  
 ‘ ble, and is sufficiently warranted  
 ‘ by the writers of Divine Poems  
 ‘ in Holy writ, yet that will not  
 ‘ justifie all the subjects, Poets pitch  
 ‘ upon, and a conscientious man will  
 ‘ take as much care, that the subject  
 ‘ he writes of, be grave and serious,  
 ‘ at least innocent, as he would do  
 ‘ of his discourse in common con-  
 ‘ versation.

‘ I do not doubt, but that writing  
 ‘ things obscene and filthy, and un-  
 ‘ decent, and contrary to good man-  
 ‘ ners, and whereby others may be  
 ‘ Scandalized, and either drawn into  
 ‘ sin, or harden’d in it, is as bad as  
 ‘ speaking of them. Without all  
 ‘ peradventure a man may be witty  
 ‘ without being profane, and exercise  
 ‘ his

his fancy to the edification of readers, without launching out into things, at which Nature and Religion teaches us to blush, and I need only put you in mind of what the incomparable Mr. Cowley saith, in his Preface to his works, speaking of the admirable subjects that the Scripture affords for the exercise of Wit and Poetry; *It is not without grief, saith he, and indignation, that I behold that Divine science employing all her inexhaustable riches of wit and eloquence, either in the wicked and beggarly flattery of great persons, or the unmanly idolizing of foolish Women, or the wretched affectation of scurril laughter, or at best on the confused and antiquated dreams of senseless fables, and metamorphoses.*

As for reading of modern Plays, he that considers what an aversion from seriousness, and better things, the reading of them causes in the younger sort, will find no great reason

reason to encourage them in such trifles, but rather to dissuade them all he can from studies of this nature, and though I believe that a grave, serious man, whose senses are throughly exercised to discern betwixt good and evil, may lawfully peruse them, to see the humour of the Age, and to know how to obviate and confute the debaucheries, and errors which are growing, and tending to the ruin of good manners, as skillful Physitians may meddle with poison, to make antidotes of it; yet to persons whose understandings are slippery and weak, whose passions are stronger then their reason, and who have already too great a tincture of sensuality, and consequently may easily encrease the ill humour by such diversions, they ought to be forbid by those, who have the care of their education.

‘ These

' These Sir, are my thoughts of  
 ' the Query you proposed to me,  
 ' and though the Letter be some-  
 ' what long , yet I hope the argu-  
 ' ments I have laid down, are not  
 ' impertinent ; That they are liable  
 ' to exceptions, I question not, being  
 ' sensible that it's easier to cavil, than  
 ' to answer, and where men are re-  
 ' solved to maintain the vain humour,  
 ' they have imbibed from conversa-  
 ' tion, they will always have some-  
 ' thing to say against the most sober  
 ' truths and assertions. The drift  
 ' and design of the Gospel is certain-  
 ' ly on our side ; if any be fond of  
 ' preferring the dictates of flesh and  
 ' blood, or the suggestions of the  
 ' world, before the mortifying les-  
 ' sons of our crucified Redeemer,  
 ' all that we can say is this, that we  
 ' would have healed *Babylon*, but  
 ' she would not be healed.

' I shall only add my wishes and  
 ' prayers, that what you have read  
 ' here, may be a means to bring you  
     ' to

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 ' to

'to a noble sense of a better World  
 'and convince you, that the way to  
 'attain a future bliss, is very differ-  
 ent from that, which leads to sen-  
 'sual delights, and satisfactions: Our  
 'natures are generally too prone to  
 'gratifie the flesh, and we had not  
 'need add fewel to the fire, but to  
 'do all we can to quench that, which  
 'is already kindled, that after our  
 'selfdenials here, we may reign with  
 'the self-denying *Jesus*, with whom  
 'we cannot live hereafter, except  
 'we suffer with him here, and en-  
 dure the loss of the pleasures of sin for  
 'a feason, nor sit with him in his  
 'Throne, except we continue with  
 'him in his temptations here. And  
 'I am persuaded, that did you live  
 'more in Heaven, and gave your  
 'self time to meditate on the things  
 'which are not seen; Did you in-  
 'corporate those everlasting joys  
 'with your mind, and riveted the  
 'belief of that endless bliss into your  
 'very spirits, that your faith might  
 'be

' be the substance of things unseen, and  
 ' the evidence of the treasures hoped  
 ' for, you would despise these shews  
 ' and glories of the world, as much as  
 ' you do value and esteem them now,  
 ' and would be so far from stopping  
 ' your ears against the reasons I have  
 ' given, that you would study and  
 ' invent more, to controll the vulgar  
 ' errors of mankind.

' Get but once a true relish of spi-  
 ' ritual things, and you will look  
 ' between anger and scorn on these  
 ' trivial objects, admired by the vul-  
 ' gar. And why should not you  
 ' raise your soul above the bubbles  
 ' of external pomp? whatever diffi-  
 ' culty there may be in the attempt,  
 ' the fruit that grows on the tree at  
 ' last, will sufficiently recompence  
 ' your labour. Our Souls are active  
 ' or unactive, according as we take  
 ' pains with them, and though there  
 ' be some irksomeness in swimming  
 ' against the stream of carnal incli-  
 ' nations, yet if the Hill be once  
     ' conquered,

'conquered, the serene Air that is in  
 'the top of it, the gentle Gales, the  
 'glorious Sun-shine, the sweetnes of  
 'Rest, that crowns all the Hardships,  
 'will make you bless the day that  
 'you begun to mind the things  
 'which belong unto your Peace. And  
 'that you may do so, is the unfeign-  
 'ed Desire of,

SIR,

*Your daily Orator at the*

*Throne of Mercy, &c.*

And having hitherto discoursed of the Nature of sensual Delights and Recreations, and how far a Christian is bound to deny himself in them upon the account of a future Judgment; to compleat these Meditations, it will be necessary to draw some useful Inferences from the Premises.

## INFERENCES.

I. This clears what the Wise Man says, Eccles. 7. 2. That 'tis better to go to the House of Mourning than to the House of Feasting. So sad a Prospect, as that of a future Judgment is, one would think, were enough to hush all Mirth and Jollity whatsoever; however, we may rationally conclude, that it's enough to turn the Byass, and make the Soul have less Affection for Mirth, than Sorrow and Severity of Behaviour. The antient Heathens make use of this Apologue; Sorrow and Mirth presented themselves one day before Jupiter, and desired him to determine which of them two was best, and most to be chosen. Sorrow pleaded, That it made Men pensive, and serious, caused them to think, brought them to a due Sense of their own Frailty, and a profound Veneration of the Divine Majesty, made them

com-

compassionate, and tender-hearted, besides many other Advantages, the dull World took no notice of. *Mirth* on the other side alledged, that it cheer'd the Spirits, made them lively, and fit for Service, enabled them to do great and noble Things, made Men good Company and belov'd of their Neighbours, beguil'd the tedious Hours of Humane Life, and was an Emblem of the Joys, the Gods themselves were drunk withall. *Jupiter* having heard them plead a considerable time, and weigh'd the Reasons on both sides, found the Decision of the Case so difficult, that he dismiss't them without any other Answer but this, That he could not tell. But what a Heathen Oracle could not resolve, a Christian, guided by the Word of Life, may soon determine: and he that believes the tremendous things, the Scripture speaks of, cannot but conclude, that there is less Danger in Seriousness and Sorrow, than in Mirth and Jollity,

lity, because there are fewer Temptations in the one than there are in the other. Our Natures certainly are not so prone to sin in a Charnel House as they are at a Theatre, nor our Affections so apt to run out into Licentiousness in a Church, as they are at a publick Shew. And though a Man may be strong, and courageous, and able to defie all Dangers, yet a *Sampson* may be overcome by a *Dalilah*; and if he be not overcome, yet something may stick by him, which may put an everlasting stop to his Growth in Grace and Virtue.

He that goes much to the House of Mourning provides infinitely better for the Safety of his Soul than he that frequents the House of Mirth and Feasting: the former walks in a beaten Path, whereas the other ventures over a narrow Bridge, or treads on the edge of a Wall, where it's possible, he may come off with Safety; but for one that escapes without

out a Fall, there are twenty and forty that miscarry. He that presses through a Hedge of Thorns may possibly get through without tearing his Cloaths, but he that hath Patience till he comes to a Gate, and opens it, and so passes on, takes the surer way.

The wisest Men in all Ages have judged it better to converse with Spectacles of Misery, than with Objects favouring of external Splendour. He that visits a Hospital, where he beholds variety of distressed Creatures, some lame, some blind, some wounded, some deaf, some sick, some roaring under grievous Pains, will certainly go away more edified than he that feeds his Eyes with all the Gayeties of a luxurious Court; the former may leave some kindly Impressions upon him, and oblige him to admire the distinguishing Mercy, Goodness, and Compassion of God, who hath suffer'd no such Accident to befall him,

and season his Heart with Pity and Compassion, with Tenderness and Charity; whereas the excess and extravagance of the other will, do what he can, leave a touch of Lightness and Vanity upon his Affections. That's the Reason why some provident Men heretofore, have carried their Winding-Sheets with them in their March, others digg'd their Sepulchres and Graves in their Gardens, others at their Solemn Feasts have had a Death's-Head served up, and placed upon the Table, others in a certain Room in their House, have set an empty Coffin, on purpose, that looking upon these Spectacles often, their Minds might be taken off from Admiration of worldly Satisfactions, and placed upon Objects which might furnish them with more melancholick Contemplations: and this, in all Probability, will be the effect of conversing with such Objects, if we view them, not as they belong to our Trade, but as thinking

thinking Men and Philosophers. The Sexton that digs his Neighbours Grave hath an Object serious enough before him; but he goes to it, as a Man that must maintain his Family with the Gain, and therefore is never the wiser for his Familiarity with such Spectacles. The Chirurgeon that goes among the Lame, and Bruised, and Wounded, with no higher ends, than to fill his Purse, and to discharge the Office of his Art, will come home as little edified as he went: but he whose choice of such mortified Objects is voluntary, and deliberate, attended with suitable Designs of meliorating and advancing the Mind, cannot but return enrich'd with that Wisdom, the Merchandise of which is more precious than that of Gold and Silver.

Whatever the merry Sinner may think, it's better to weep than to laugh. Our Great Master, the Lord Jesus, who is a good Christian's Pattern, was of this Opinion:

T 4 and

and in Imitation of him not a few eminent Saints have preferr'd a Feast of Tears before a Banquet of Mirth and sensual Pleasure: *Arsenius, Olympias, Domnina, Abraham the Hermite, the solitary Pambo, and St. Austin,* are famous in History for their Tears; to St. Jerom they were in the nature of daily Bread, and he professes, that when his Eyes were fullest of Tears, he saw the Quires of Angels, and could discern the Orders of *Seraphim* and *Cherubim*; such a Perspicuity of sight do Tears give to a Holy Soul. That which made these great Men weep so much, was either a Sense of their own and other mens Offences, or a lively Prospect of the Love of God, or a glorious fore-sight of the Joys above. But, worldly Sorrow is no Virtue; and he that weeps much, either because he cannot have those Conveniences he would have, or is cross'd and disappointed in his Designs, or because he hath lost such a great Mans Favour,

your, or because some other Loss befalls him, weeps in vain, nay sins by his weeping, and his Sin, if he continue impenitent, brings on Death, 2 Cor. 7. 10. Floods of Tears, upon a mere temporal Account, are insignificant in Heaven, and no more than Water spilt upon the Ground; such Tears God doth not put into his Bottle, nor have the blessed Angels any Charge to number the drops that fall; but where Religion, and a mighty Sense of God, and Tenderness of his Honour and Glory, causes Rivers of Tears, and where the Soul hath so delicate a Taste that it cannot think of God without weeping, nor speak of him without weeping, nor reflect upon his Goodness without weeping, there the Man is come up to a Perfection, which is the very Suburbs of Heaven.

It's true, all People cannot weep, nor are they therefore in a damnable Condition; for they may be sincere in Goodness, and yet not be able to ex-

express their Sincerity in Tears, tho I am apt to believe, that it is for want of refining the Soul into a high Relish of Divine Objects, that puts a stop to these sacred Floods in most Men; yet where they can weep, and something they see in God, or in the Word of God, or in the Providences of God, is the true Cause of those Tears, every drop is richer than a Diamond, and such a Soul may vye Happiness with the greatest Monarchs. They are inestimable Treasures; and though Man knows not how to value them, yet the Spirits above esteem them at a mighty rate, and magnifie them in Gods Presence, *Luke 15. 10.*

It's a huge Mistake, that Men cannot rejoice except they laugh; there are Tears of Joy as well as Tears of Grief, and the very Heathen saw, that true Joy was a very serious thing. Hence it was, that they confined true Joy to their Philosophers, and left the louder Laughter to Slaves,

Slaves, and Carters, and Ploughmen: and how often have I seen the richest Joys bubble forth from the largest Tears ? Nor would Men in those Circumstances change Condition with the most potent Prince in the World, such Content, such Satisfaction , such Riches , such Wealth, appears in these Tears which Religion forces.

How much better is it to be afflicted where our Prosperity and a good Conscience are inconsistent, than to enjoy Kingdoms and Principalities without the light of Gods Countenance. This was the excellent choice of *Moses*, and of all the Martyrs of old, who were content to be fawn asunder, to be stoned, to be tormented, to wander about in Caves and Dens, weeping and destitute, rather than defile their Souls with Sin ; which puts me in mind of the good Advice St. *Jerom* gave to his Friend *Heliodorus*, 'Did the Babe, thy Grand-  
child, saith he, hang about thy Neck,  
‘ should

' Should thy Mother that bare thee bid  
 ' thee look upon the Breasts thou hast  
 ' sucked, should thine own Father lie  
 ' prostrate at thy Feet, and entreat thee  
 ' to spare thy self, and to forbear ven-  
 ' turing on the Strictness and Severi-  
 ' ties of Religion, get away from them,  
 ' my Friend, and with dry Eyes fly  
 ' unto the Banner of *Christ Jesus*: in  
 ' this case, to be cruel is the greatest  
 ' Piety. This was the Case of the  
 Primitive Believers, who preferred  
 their Distresses before *Nero's* Chair  
 of State, and took greater Pleasure  
 in their seemingly forlorn Condition,  
 than *Claudius*, or *Caligula* in their  
 Affluence. In the midst of their  
 Tears they were greater men than  
 their Persecutors; and though they  
 wanted all things, and their En-  
 emies had all that Heart could wish,  
 yet they justly believed themselves  
 happier in their Funeral Dress, than  
 the other in their Triumphs.

The Man that roars in a Tavern,  
 or sings in an Ale-house, or rejoys-  
 ces

ces in his Sin, had more need to wish, that his head were water, and his eyes a Fountain of Tears ; were he in his Wits he would do so : But his Reason is distorted, his Understanding darkned, his Eyes blinded, his Mind unhing'd, his Desires perverted, his Affections led astray, and like a distracted Creature, he rejoices in his Nakedness.

Ah brutish and inconsiderate Soul ! Thou weepest to see a Child or a near Relation dye, and canst thou see thy Soul die, and be robb'd of that Goodness which must give her Life, and be unconcerned ? Thou weepest at the loss of a thousand Pounds, and canst thou remember how thou losest God's Favour, and all Right and Interest in the Merits of a crucified Saviour, and keep thine Eyes dry ? Thou weepest to see a Friend drowning, or burning in a merciless Fire, and canst thou think how thou flingest thy self into the

the Furnace of God's Wrath, makest his Anger kindle, and wax hot against thee, and dost what thou canst to turn it into a Fire which no Man, no Angel can quench, and will no Tears flow into thine Eyes? How barbarous, how inhumane, is thy Joy? What doest thou rejoice in? That Sin which makes thee merry, that Folly that cheers thy Spirit, what is it but Ingratitude to thy kindest Benefactor? What is it but requiting the greatest Good with the greatest Evil? What is it, but contempt of him who keeps thy Soul in Life? What is it but bidding defiance to him who carries thee on his Wings, and out-does the tenderness of a Mother, the care of a Father, and doth all that's fitting to guard thy Soul from Ruine? And are these fit things to rejoice in? Are these fit Objects for thy Mirth? Are these Divertisements for a Creature that holds his very Being of God, and is beholding to him for all the Blessings he

he enjoys ? What wonder, if after all this Impiety and Stubborness, God rejoices too, rejoices in thy Groans, rejoices in thy Anguish, rejoices in thy Agonies, rejoices in thy Sense of his Justice, rejoices in thy Howlings ? This he must do at last to secure his Honour. This he will be obliged to do in the end, to vindicate the Veracity of his Threatenings. This he will be constrained to do after all, that Devils may not mock his Holiness, nor deride his Thunders, nor upbraid him with Partiality. At that time, this will appear very good Divinity, no Fable, no Romance, no Trade of Priests, no Invention of Politicians, no old Wifes Tale, no idle Story ; and if thou could'st exhaust the Sea in that day, and weep it out again, to testify thy unfeigned Sorrow, thou would'st do it.

Happy the Soul that thinks of this ! Happy the Man that believes these Terrors before he feels them.

How

How much wiser are those tender Hearts that do little else but weep and mourn, and make their Life a Valley of Tears without a Metaphor! whose Fear of offending God is so great, that every little Defect, and every accidental Miscarriage, forces Tears from their Eyes! Though there may be some Indiscretion in the Management of their Conscientiousness, yet notwithstanding all this, their Tears are the Wine of Angels; these are the gaudy Dress of a holy Soul. The Almighty, that sees her adorned with these Pearls, and glittering in these Pendants, falls on her Neck, and kisses her.

Fear not, ye afflicted, and toss'd with Tempests: So the *Lord Jesus* wept, though not for his own Sins, yet for the Sins of others, and was receiv'd into Glory; so *Mary Magdal'en* wept, and on those Streams a gracious Pardon was convey'd into her Soul; so the great St. *Paul* wept, and found the Consolations of Christ abound-

abounding in him, so the penitent Publican wept, and went justified to his House. They that sow in Tears shall reap in Joy; *Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh, Luk. 6. 21.* There is a place high, wondrous high above, where all Tears shall be wiped away, and no Sorrow, no Grief, no Anguish, shall appear; so we have heard, so we shall see e're long in the City of our God; *Verily, Verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the World shall rejoice, and ye shall be sorrowful, but your Sorrow shall be turned into Joy.* A Woman, when she is in Travel, bath Sorrow, because her Hour is come; but as soon as she is deliver'd of the Child, she remembers no more the Anguish, for Joy that a Man is born into the World. And ye now therefore have Sorrow, but I will see you again, and your Heart shall rejoice, and your Joy no Man takes from you, Joh. 16. 20, 21, 22.

2. See here, how differently spiritual things affect Men, as they either attentively, or inattentively, think upon them. The process of the Day of Judgment to a Man that retires, and through Desire, separates himself to think of it, as the Coverous doth of his Gold, or as the Timorous doth of his Danger. i. e. in good earnest, it will prove an invincible motive to self-denial. Another, that looks upon it, as a thing spoke of in course every Lords day, thinks of the Words as he hears them, but ruminates not upon the Sense, is no more moved with it, than the Carcasses that sleep in their Graves, forbears not one Sin for it, but doth still, as he used to do, mind his Body, gratifie his Flesh, pursue his temporal Interest, comply with sinful Men, please himself, regard Religion on the By, and set his Affections on things below. And as it is in this, so it is in other Truths; for, do but take a view of the Publick

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lick Assemblies ; here the glad Tidings of God's Mercy to penitent Sinners shall make an humble Spirit weep, melt his Heart, and force him into humble Thoughts, and lively Admirations of God's Condescension ; there sits another, and either sleeps all the while, or continues in as even a Temper as he came : What's the Reason ? One weighs the Importance of this Truth, considers the vast distance betwixt God and sinful Man, thinks, if these things be true, how marvellous God's Love must be ; and that touches him to the Quick. The other's Thoughts are unstable, as Water, uncertain and inconstant : he satisfies himself with this, that he hath heard a Sermon, performed his Complement to God, and consequently finds no Alteration in his inward Man.

How have I seen sometimes a pious Soul transported with a lively Description of the unseen everlasting Glory, while the greatest part of the

Congregation have been no more concerned at it, than if one had spoke of common Trees, and Herbs, and the Hysop on the Wall: the Reason is plain, The one thinks of it as a Believer, the other as an Infidel. The one reflects, Lord, what am I, and what is my Father's house, that thou intendest to advance me to this Dignity, lift up a poor Worm from a Dunghil to a Throne, and place him with Princes, even with the Princes of thy People, the innumerable Company of Angels. The other pleases himself only with the Sound, mingles the Thoughts of the World with his Devotion, suffers not the glorious Object to lye long in his Mind, and so it passes, as it came, without any Impression. Here one rejoices at the precious Promises of the Gospel, his very Heart leaps at the joyful News, and they come like Oyl into his Bones, warm his very Soul, and pierce even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit:

Spirit : there another sits like a Stock, and wonders what ails his Neighbour to keep such a stir about a few empty Words. But why should'st thou wonder at the Change thou see'st in thy Friend ? He thinks of the Veracity of God, and how these Promises will most certainly be fulfilled ; he thinks, how the Riches God promises exceed all the Treasures of this present World, and what Satisfaction they afford to a hungry Soul, how far they do transcend these earthly Glories, and how to have a share in them, is a far greater Priviledge than to be related to the greatest Monarchs ; and that raises his Soul into that secret Joy. Thou thinkest no more than a Lyon or Elephant, thinkest more of thy Profit and Gain than of these intellectual Treasures ; thy Thoughts are not busie about these Enjoyments ; thou thinkest it time lost to spend any serious Thoughts upon them, and how should thy dull-

er Soul be affected with them ?

Here the Example of a valiant Saint, that fought with his Lusts, overcame his Desires, stood steadfast in the hour of Temptation, conquer'd the Devil, vanquish'd all Oppositions, kept the Faith, finish'd his Course with joy, draws an attentive Soul into Imitation of his Virtues. There another that hears or reads the same Description, feeds still on his Husks, follows his careless Neighbour, delights in vain Company, continues in his Aversion from the stricter Lives of holy Men. The Reason is evident ; for, the one thinks of the noble Attempts such Souls have made, how they are applauded in Heaven, how they have signaliz'd their Valour, what Comforts they have prepared for, and of the Reward they now enjoy : the other looks upon them as melancholick Men, thinks of his present Pleasure more than of a future Recompence, dives not into the nature

of

of these Conquests, reflects not how agreeable they are to Reason, or how necessary in order to a Crown; but thinks he may have the Diadem spoken of with less Trouble, and therefore he sits still upon his Dung-hill. Vain Sons of Men! How long will ye turn your Glory into Shame? Hath God bestowed upon you a Faculty which Beasts are Strangers to, and for which Devils envy you, even Reason and Understanding, the true Image of your Maker, and will you let it lye dormant in the Ashes and Rubbish of your sensual Inclinations? When God hath distinguish'd you from the ignoble Brutes, will ye be like the Horse and Mule, whose Mouths must be held with Bitt and Bridle? Behold, the Almighty hath prepared a Supper for you; and when the Morning and Noon of your Life is spent, designs a Feast for you at Night immediately after Death, a Feast, where the Lamb that was slain

sits Master, and intends to bid you welcome; a Feast, where the Meat will be Angels Food, the Wine Hallelujahs, and the Entertainment, Perfection of Bliss and Glory; the Company, the Apostles of the Lamb, and the Spirits of Men made perfect; a Feast, where no Good will be absent, and no Evil present, where Plenty and Affluence will last for ever, where Joys will abound, and the beatifick Presence of God will charm and ravish Souls to all Eternity. To this Feast he calls you, to this Banquet he invites you, to this Table he sends for you, to these Dainties you are bid, to these Delicates you are entreated to come, of these Varieties you shall be made Partakers; and is it not worth considering, what this mighty Offer means? What if you see it not with mortal Eyes? your Thoughts may see it, your Understanding may behold it, your Reason may take a view of it. Your Thoughts will tell

tell you, that God, who cannot lye, hath promised it, the Son of God, who is Truth it self, hath revealed it; the Apostles, who came attended with the Power of Miracles, have publish'd it. These will tell you, that there can be no doubt of it, and that it is as certain, as if you were actually Sharers of it. Give but your Understanding leave to search into this Mystery, and you will be charmed with it; give but your Reason leave to ascend and descend upon the Ladder of the Word of God, and you will feel a Hunger and Thirst after it; your Souls will long for it, your Affections will breath after it, and your inward and outward Man will labour after it, and strive to enter in at the strait Gate; and shall all these Riches be lost upon you for want of Thinking and Contemplation? Could you by thinking make those Joys visible to you, and will ye refuse it! Could you by meditating make that Glory present to you,  
and

and will you neglect the Opportunity ? Could you by musing and pondering bring Heaven into your Chambers and Closets, and will ye debarr your selves of that glorious Sight ?

See what you lose by your Inconsiderateness ! See what Consolations, what Satisfactions, what Cordials, you deprive your immortal Souls of ! Can you see other Men run away with all the Comforts of the Gospel , and remain senseleis ? Can you see others get into the Pool of *Bethesda* before you , and recover , and are you fond of continuing lame , and blind , and poor , and miserable ? Can you see others carry away the Crown , and feel no Ambition in you ? Can you see others take away the Blessing of your Father from you , and be unmoved at the want of it ? Can you see how other Men by thinking arrive to Perfection , and will you lye groveling in the Dust ? O ! think while thinking may do

do you good. In Hell you'll think, but it will be too late; there you'll think, but your Thoughts will be your Torment; there your Thoughts will be the undoing of you; there you'll think what happy Persons you might have been if you had imitated *Abraham's* Faith, and *Moses's* Resolution, *David's* Candour, and *Josiah's* Piety, *St. Paul's* Courage, and *St. Peter's* Tears, *St. John's* Love, and *Lydia's* Attentiveness, the *Berrhæans* Zeal, and the *Macedonian* Churches Charity, *Zachæus* his Restitution, and the *Publican's* Repentance; but these Thoughts will then be your Vexation, since the working time is past, and the day of Vengeance come. There you'll think that Christ was your Friend, indeed, when he made himself of no Reputation, but took upon him the form of a Servant, became obedient to the Cross, and dyed for you; but to think that he is your Enemy now, because you refused Obedience to him,

him, because you made light of his Offers, and would not accept of him for your Governour, must needs fill you with endless Grief, and bitterness of Spirit. *Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver,* Psal. 50. 22.

3. And is not the greatest part of the World to be pityed, that can delight in nothing but what they can grasp and feel? The Covetous can delight in nothing but in Gold: If he want Money, all his Joy is gone: If his Coffers be full, and his Barns stock'd with Corn, and Plenty doth surround him, his Heart rejoices, his Soul triumphs, and Cheerfulness plumps his Cheeks; but without this, his Mind is disturbed, his Faculties languish, his Countenance is dejected, and he looks like a dying Man. Who would imagine, that this Man hath a rational Soul? Who would think, he were created after the Image of God? Who would

conclude him to have lived in a Land where the Gospel is preach'd? Who can inferr from his Actions, or Behaviour, that this Man believes a Word of Scripture? Who would take the Wretch for a Disciple of the poor and afflicted Jesus? Who that looks upon him, would not be apt to cry with him, *Sit anima mea cum Philosophis*, Let me dye the Death of some brave self-denying Heathen Philosopher? For these certainly are in a likelier way of Salvation, at least of escaping the Wrath to come, than the covetous Christian.

Diogenes being desired of Alexander the Great to beg either Gold or Silver of him, received this Answer, Do but stand out of the Sun, and do not hinder that glorious Light from shining upon me, and I have enough. The brave Crates having sold what he had, and turned it into Money, generously threw it all into the Sea, saying, It's far better, I should drown thee, than that thou should'st

should'st drown me in Perdition. *Alexander* having sent to the great *Phocion* two Talents of Gold, the wise Man ask'd the Messengers, Seeing there were so many good Men at *Athens*, why the King should of all Men make choice of him, to present him ? The Ambassadours answer'd, because of all Men he look'd upon him as the honestest. Say you so ? replyed the Philosopher, Then let *Alexander* give me leave to be still an honest Man, which I can be without all these Presents, and glistening Treasures.

*Cimon* had two large Cups sent him from a *Persian* King, the one full of Gold, the other of Silver. He looks upon them smilingly; and asks the Man who brought them, Whether his Master intended, that *Cimon* should be his Friend or his Servant ? The man replied, It was out of Ambition to have him for his Friend, that he sent it. Oh ! then saith he, take them back again, for being

being his Friend, when I have need of them, I can send for them at any time.

*Epaminondas*, when some came to corrupt him with gifts, invites the *Ambassadors* to Dinner, and there entertains them with Roots, and Herbs, and with small sour Wine. Dinner being done, Go home, saith he, and tell your Prince, that *Epaminondas* being content with such a Dinner, is not easily to be drawn by Bribes into a base and trayterous Action.

*Fabritius*, the Roman General, having concluded a Peace with the *Samnites*, the Magistrates of the *Samnites*, by way of Gratitude send six Ambassadors to him with vast Sums of Money, begging of him to accept of it; but he stroaking his Head, and Face, and Breast, and Knees, Gentlemen, saith he, while I can command these Limbs I have no need of Money; and so dismissed them. *Curius* gave the same Answer

to

to them, adding, that he had rather rule over Persons, than be possess'd of Money himself.

These Men were Heathens, whose Delight in Virtue drown'd their Delight in these outward Comforts. They saw, what an Impediment to Goodness, these Heaps of Silver were, and therefore scorn'd to delight in a thing so base and trivial; they were sensible, that the Soul had her Riches as well as the Body, and as the former by the Confession of Mankind, went beyond the other in value, so it was reasonable they should delight in the one more than in the other. These Men were better Christians by the Light of Nature, than thousands among us are with all the helps that Revelation and Grace affords; not that the Fault lies in the means, which are larger and richer than *Pagans* and *Infidels* have, but that men stupifie their Souls more under these Advantages, than Heathens

thens did under the lesser Irradiations of the Divine Light and Splendour.

So then the very Heathens saw, that the more spiritual the Delight was, the nobler it was, and the more it was refin'd, and purified from the Drosses of the World, the more rational it was, and therefore more amiable, and fitter to be embrac'd: and sure, God must have provided but very ill for Mankind, when he embued, and impregnated their Souls with a Sense of Religion, if he had not put something into Religion, that's charming, and lovely, whereby their Souls might be attracted to delight in it. Religion being derived from him, who is the Fountain of Delight, and Satisfaction, must necessarily have that in it which may make humane Souls rejoice, and exalt their Delight into a victorious Supremacy above all worldly Pleasures.

What did the Lord Jesus delight in, who lived upon Alms? What did the Apostles delight in, who were in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities, and Distresses, in Stripes, in Imprisonments, in tossings to and fro, in Labours, in Watchings, in Fastings? What did all the Primitive Believers delight in, that were poor, and naked, driven into Exile, banish'd, forced to work in Mines, chased away from the Comforts of Wife, Children, and Relations? Something certainly they delighted in; for humane Nature cannot well subsist without delight in something. It could not be the Riches of this World, for they had them not; nor indeed did they care for them, when they were offered them: it was Religion, that engrossed their Delight. This made them joyful in all Conditions; this raised their drooping Spirits under the Rage of their Persecutors; and certainly it would be hard

hard, if a glorious God, with all his Attributes, and the wonderful things he hath revealed to our Comfort, were improper Objects of Delight : and since these are the genuine Delights of a Christian, O besotted Soul, why dost thou delight in broken Cisterns, when thou hast the Fountain of living Waters to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in *Apes* and *Peacocks*, when thou hast the Creator of all these to rejoice in ? Why dost thou delight in a morsel of Meat, when thou hast the Birth-right of eternal Glory to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in the shade of the Bramble, when thou hast the shadow of God's Wings to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in the nether Springs, when thou hast the upper Springs of Mercy to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in Houses, when thou hast a House made without Hands to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in the Rivers of *Damascus*, when thou hast the River of God's

Pleasure to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in a fading Beauty, when thou hast him that's altogether lovely to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in the Voice of a deceitful *Siren*, when thou hast him whose Voice comforts the Mourners of *Sion* to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in the Slavery of thy Lusts, when thou hast him, whose Service is perfect Freedom to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in a little Gain, in Drops of Happiness, in Crums of Bliss, in shining Dust, when thou hast a Sea of Glory to delight in ?

How deep must thy Soul lye immerst in Body, if such illustrious Objects cannot delight it ! How far must thou be yet from the Kingdom of Heaven, if things of this nature cannot content thee ! How earthly must thy Heart be, how debauch'd, how perverted from the end of its Creation, if these spiritual Delights are insipid to it !

There

There are some here I believe, who have tasted of both Delights, the sinful ones of the Flesh, and those which are proper for holy Souls ; tell me, I beseech you, whether you think a Fit of Laughter, or a drunken Bout, or a merry Meeting, you once delighted in, so sweet, so comfortable, so refreshing, as the gentle, and soft, and kinder Influences of God's Spirit, when you have been engaged in Prayer, and Praises, and Contemplations of a future State ? When you have been wrestling with God, and after that work of Love have felt a holy assurance of God's Favour upon your Spirits, can any thing be more pleasing, or charming, than those divine Communications ? When you have entred into Meditation of God's Goodness, and the Love of God hath shined bright upon your Souls, have not you felt that, which hath been as much beyond all sensual Delights as an oriental Pearl is beyond Brass or

Copper, or such baser Minerals? Have not you found a Joy stealing upon your Souls after such refreshing Considerations, as hath transported you even into love of Martyrdom? How contented have you been after such Exercises, or after some signal Self-denial? How harmonious have your Spirits and Affections been after such Enjoyments of God's loving Kindness, and how like soft and curious Musick have these Gales of the Divine Goodness composed your troubled Thoughts, and hush'd them into a lasting Peace! And is not this infinitely better, than the Pleasures of *Sardanapalus*, of *Dives*, and other luxurious men? Will not this turn to better account at last than fleshly Lusts, which war against the Soul? Look upon *Heliogabalus*, who tryed how great a Monster a man could make himself; in his Cloaths you should see nothing but Gold and Purple, his Beds were embroidered, and the Feathers that were in them must

must be the softer Feathers of Partridges taken from under their Wings, mix'd with the finest Rabbets hair. He would ride in a Chariot shining with Rubies and Diamonds, and not only in the out-side of his Shooes, but even within, he would have precious Stones : he would not ride abroad under six hundred Coaches with him ; his Beds and Rooms were strow'd with all sorts of curious Flowers, and an everlasting Perfume filled his Halls and Parlors : sometimes in a Frolick he would be drawn in a Chariot by four Mastiff Dogs, sometimes by four Stags, sometimes by four Tygers as *Bacchus*, sometimes by four Lions, as *Cybele*, sometimes by four beautiful Women. Now and then he would cause Ships to be richly laden with all costly Commodities, and then sink them in the Sea. At some of his Meals he would have six hundred Estriches Heads at the Table ; And when the Humour took him,

all his Courses should be nothing but Pheasants heaped and piled together in Dishes, sometimes they should all be Pullets ; sometimes nothing would serve him, but to have all sorts of deformed men at his Table, eight lame Men, eight blind, eight Blacks, eight gouty, eight fat, eight bald, eight deaf. In such Fooleries he delighted ; and because the *Syrian* Priests had told him, that he would dye an unnatural Death, he would keep Poison in golden Vessels, to kill himself, before any Person should be able to lay hold on him; to this purpose, he would have silk-en Halters about him, and Penknives set with Diamonds to dispatch himself, when he should see occasion, and he built also a Tower, which he over-laid with Gold, that in Case of any sudden Attack, he might throw himself from the top of it. These were the fottish Delights of this man, and yet after all, he died in a Jakes.

I have

I have mention'd this Brute, and his Actions, because there are in his short Life all the extravagant Actions that a distemper'd Brain can invent, and all the Delights that a mad man could think of, yet who would not prefer a Delight in a good Conscience, and delight in God's Worship, and delight in Acts of Charity, and delight in heavenly Thoughts before it ? Sensual Delights must at last expire, but spiritual Delights do not die ; but as you have seen those vast Balls of burnish'd Brass on Church-Steeple's cast a glorious lustre as soon as the Sun shines upon them, so at a serious man's Death, his delight in Holiness, upon God's favourable Acceptance of it, instead of expiring and decaying, immediately grows bigger in its Glory, the Rays of it spread, and enlarge their Borders, and stretch themselves into Eternity. And therefore,

4. *Who can harbour any bad Thoughts of Religion, because it debars*

*bars us of disorderly sensual Delights?* In doing so, it does us a kindness, is our Friend, prevents our Danger, saves us from the Pit, delivers us from Hell, makes us live like Men. It doth not debarr us of that which will make us happy, nor hinder us from solid Joy, nor deprive us of such sensual Delights, as are necessary for our Preservation. The Delights it keeps us from, are fitter for Swine than for rational Creatures: it separates us from delights, which will lead the Soul into the Shadow and Valley of Death, from Delights, which dethrone the ruling part in us, make the Master serve the Man, and from Princes debase us to a state of Thraldom. It denies us such delights as make God our Enemy, move him to depart from us, and provoke him to Indignation. It will not suffer us to meddle with Delights, which destroy the Glory of the Mind, damp our Zeal, alienate the Heart from God, and drive away his

his holy Spirit from us. It is against all such Delights as would make us miserable, and enamoured with Sin, and the World, and in being an Enemy to such Delights it consults our good. It is more favourable to us than we are to our selves, and seeks to make us like God.

God is above all sensual Delights, he is not taken with the Beauty of the Face in Man or Woman ; he undervalues a great Table, and hates the Prodigality of the Spend-thrift ; he hath no Body to please, no Eyes to satisfie with glittering Objects, no Ears to delight with artificial Sounds, no Blood to cherish with studied Cordials ; and though the World be his, and the fullness thereof, yet he solaces not himself in the Pleasures of it ; his Delights are great, like himself ; spiritual like his Essence, infinite as his Glory, eternal as his Being ; he delights in himself, and is to himself the Object of his Pleasure : he delights in the eternal brightness

ness of his own Glory, and the express Image of his Person : he delights in his own boundless Understanding, whereby he knows all things, past, present, and to come, and sees all Beings before they are, and what will come to pass, and dives into their nature, ends, designs, and the Accidents that befall them : his delight lies in doing good, and communicating the Rays of his Holiness to his Subjects. He delights in his own Perfections, and Virtue is the amiable Spectacle of his Eyes : he delights in a Soul that loves him, and an humble Heart is to him a glorious sight. The Soul that loves her own Lowliness, and is content to be little, and despised in the World, embraces Contempt and Reproaches, and like the mighty *Jesus*, runs with Patience the Race, that's set before her ; this causes Joy in Heaven.

To this likeness, Religion would advance the Soul ; not that it hopes

to give it the same Perfection, but that it designs to work some Resemblance betwixt her, and that Sovereign Being. The Soul being in some measure capable of this Delight, its Endeavour is to bring her to a sense of it. In a word, it seeks to reduce Man to the first state of Innocence, from which by Sin he fell. And though *Adam* had all the Riches and Glories of the World concentrated in his Paradise, yet his Delights were more spiritual than sensual, since his Joys were not so much from the Flowers, and Trees, and Animals themselves, as from the Excellency, Power, Wisdom, Greatness of God, which glistered in their Make, and Use, and the Ends, for which they were created. He saw indeed the *proud Tulip*, the fragrant Rose, the odiferous Jessamin, and rejoiced; he beheld the Cherry, the Fig, the Almond, and the Apple, and triumph'd; he cast his Eyes on the laden Trees, and how they seemed

seemed to let down their Arms to put their richer fruits into his Mouth, and was glad ; he took a view of the Fishes, that danced, and leap'd in the Chrystral Rivers, that water'd the glorious place, and his Spirits were enliven'd ; but at the same time, the Bounty, Liberality, and Omnipotence of the great Architect of all, appeared so lively to his Mind, that he made his Garden a true Emblem of Heaven, fell down, and Day and Night sung the Praises of his Creator, as if he vyed with the Angels of the upper World, and were trying, who should hold out longest at melodious Hallelujahs.

This Kindness Religion intends to our Souls, and therefore suggests unto us the Promises and Threatnings of God, to keep our Feet steddy in the way, they are to walk in : to this purpose it tells us, That he who loves sensual Pleasure shall be a poor man, poor in Grace, poor in gifts of God's holy Spirit, poor with Respect

spect to God's Favour, poor even to contempt, destitute of those richer incomes, which sanctified Souls receive, deprived of the Juice and Sap, which flows from the flourishing Vine, the Lord Jesus, in want of a fore-taste of Heaven, and of a sense, What the hope of Gods calling is, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance is in the Saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his Power toward them that believe, according to the working of his mighty Power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right Hand in heavenly places, Eph. 1. 18, 19, 20. Who can grumble at Religion after all these advantages? Who can find fault with it after this prospect of its benefits? Who dares asperse that beauteous Virgin after such Fruits it bears? Who would not esteem it? Who would not prize it? Who would not honour it? Who would not speak well of it? Who would not look upon it as a horn of plenty,

plenty, and a treasury of the greatest comforts ? Who would not maintain the honour of it, against all opponents ? who would not vindicate it, when it is abused ? Who would not rise up in defence of it, when blasphemous Tongues would traduce, and revile it ? Let no man say here, I can follow my Carnal pleasures, and yet be religious too ; Alas ! What Piety can that be, where thy Affections are divided betwixt Religion, and Worldly Pleasures , and where these Delights commonly have the greater share ? May be thou fayest thy Prayers, so have I seen Parrets, and Magpies repeat a few Sentences, which they have been taught , May be, thou goest to Church ; so have I seen a Blind-man sit down by a Candle, but to no purpose : Thou mayest attempt to reconcile the Temple of God, and Idols, but these attempts are as vain , as thy pleasures are ; while these sensual delights ingross thy Mind, the Word must needs be

a dead

a dead Letter to thee: Heaven can not supple thy Soul, Hell cannot fright it; the Thunders of God are insignificant to it, and thou art unfit to dye, unfit to appear at the great Tribunal.

The Heathens tell this Fable, That *Ceres* coming down from Heaven one day, gave out, that she was a Nurse; whereupon, King *Elen-sus* took her to attend his Son *Trip-tolemus*, and having him under her Tuition, in the day time she fed him with celestial Milk, and in the night she cover'd him with Fire to give him Immortality. Religion is that Fire, which must make you immortal; this purges away your dross, and cleanseth your Hearts from the dregs of Sin, and Death, makes you bright and shining, and capable of eternal Light. No Nurse is so tender of you as Religion is: it feeds you with celestial Milk that you may be strong in the Lord, and able to put on the whole Armour of

Y                    God;

God, and grow up into a perfect Man in Christ : what ? if it will not suffer you to please your Flesh beyond what is necessary for its Subsistence , must it therefore be your Enemy ? Will you count it a Foe because it denies you the Sword which would kill you ? How lovely should this very thing make it in your Eyes ! How dear should this make its holy Precepts to you ! How should you rejoice, that you have such a Monitor to prevent your Ruine ! What Praises do you owe to God, that witholds you from that which would throw your Souls upon their Death-beds ! I conclude the Inference with this Story : Two Brethren were travelling, one a very prudent Man, the other rude and silly ; coming to a place where two Ways met, they dispute, which of the two they should take ; one look'd as if great Art had been bestow'd upon it, Flowers grew on both sides, and it seemed to be most fre-

frequented ; the other look'd rough and uneven, like a Foot-path than a High-way : the weaker Brother, charmed with the out-side, was clearly for making choice of the former ; but the wiser, though he saw that the pleasant way invited the Eye, yet I fear, saith he, it will not bring us to a commodious Lodging, the rather, because I have heard, that the less beaten Path leads to an Inn, where we may have excellent Accommodation. The foolish Fellow was peremptory in it, that the most pleasant way must be the right way ; and prevails with the Brother to bear him Company : and being advanced considerably in it, they light upon a Company of Robbers, who immediately clap Shackles on their hands and feet, and hale them both to their Captain and Goverhour : Here one Brother accuses the other ; the wiser charges the other with Stubbornness ; the weaker blamed the other's Facility, and alledged,

That since his Brother pretended to greater Wisdom than he, he should not have been perswaded. In fine, both are found guilty, and both laid up in Prison. These two Brethren are your Souls and Bodies: your Soul is the wise, your Body the foolish Brother. Let not your Body by its Importunity prevail with the Soul to consent to its Desires and Fondnesses of the dangerous Delights of the World. O ! hearken not to the Perswasions of a sensual Appetite, that chooses a present Satisfaction, but considers not, there are Robbers at the end of the way, which will certainly throw both into outward Darkness.

5. *The great Day is at Hand, let's prepare for it.* So Christ told his Disciples, and so the Apostles taught the Christian World; nor must we wonder, that the *Blessed Jesus* should fright his Followers with the Approaches of that day, when he knew, it would not come in sixteen hundred

dred Years, and more, which are past, since his appearing in the World. I omit here the Calculations of curious Men, who have been bold to determine the Year in which the day of Judgment will happen; some that follow the Tradition of *Elias* have allow'd two thousand Years to the Oeconomy before the Law, two thousand to that under the Law, and two thousand to that under the Gospel, and after this have placed the Succession of that tremendous day. But I doubt that this is rather a Jewish Criticism than a real Prophecy: for, God having created the World in six days, and a thousand Years being as one Day with the Lord, it's like Men have concluded from this Notion, That as the World was created in six days, so after six days, i. e. six thousand years, it would be destroyed. Some when they have seen any extraordinary Judgments of Hail, or Rain, or Thunder, or Locusts, or great Con-

fusions happen in the World, have from thence inferr'd the immediate coming of this Day. Some have placed it in one Year, some in another, but all these are needless Speculations. It's enough that the Decree is sealed in Heaven, that there will be such a prodigious day ; and it was as truly at hand in Christ's time, as it is now, and now, as much as it was then ; nay as much now, as it will be but a Year or a Month before it comes in good earnest ; for the day of our Death is at hand, and we know not when, or how soon, whether this Hour or the next, the fatal Messenger will arrest us in our Journey. The day of our Death is the fore-runner of that greater Day, and according as our Souls are found at the day of our Death, so they will be judged in that glorious day : the Judgment, that will be pronounced upon our Souls at our Death, will be proclaimed aloud before the whole World in the

the other day ; and if they be so unhappy as to be condemned upon their departure hence, they will all that while, till the great day comes, torment themselves with the thoughts of that Sentence, and the Shame that will ensue upon it, as holy Souls will comfort themselves with the Thoughts of their Absolution. Therefore, when our Souls leave this Body, that day and hour, is really a day of Judgment to us : and that this day is at hand, none but a Stoick can deny ; and accordingly all Men of Sense have made, and do make early Preparation for it, and he that doth not imitate them, is so far from giving Proof to the World, that he is wiser than they, that he proclaims his Stupidity, and, in a manner, renounces his Portion in the Inheritance of the Saints in light. But then by Preparation I do not mean those little Sprinklings of Devotion, which Hypocrites, and Men who pretend to love God, yet will

not part with their Lusts, usually lay upon his Altar, not the *Pbarisees* Alms, and Fasts, and Prayer, which were performed with sinister designs, out of Vain-glory and Ostentation ; not *Abab's* Repentance, who put on Sack-cloath, and walk'd softly, but still kept an unmortified Heart ; not *the Harlots* Piety *Salomon Pro.7.14.* speaks of, who said her Orisons, and paid her Vows, and her Peace-offerings, and thought to make God amends for the Crimes she liv'd in, by these Services ; not *Judas* his Sorrow, who lamented his Sin, because he saw the Hell he was like to drop into ; not *Demas* his temporary Severity, which soon chang'd into fondness of the World ; not the *Angel of Sardis* his Profession of Religion, who had the name that he liv'd, but was dead ; not the *Jews* Zeal for the Ceremonial Part of God's Worship, while they neglected Justice, Mercy, Chastity, Sobriety, and Charity ; not the Zeal of

of *Ezekiel's Hearers*, who loved to hear, but were loath to do: but, if you would prepare for this day of Account, so as to be commended by the Judge, the Preparation must have these following Ingredients.

1. *Pity those inconsiderate Men that live as if there were no future Judgment.* Express your Compassion to their Souls by your Tears, since they will not weep for themselves: Ah! miserable Creatures! E're long they shall see him whom they have pierc'd, and mourn, as one that mourns for his only Son, and they are not aware of it! They are hastening to the Shambles, where they will be barbarously butcher'd by hal-lish Furies, and they are not sensible of it! Oh, mourn for them! They deserve your Pity more than Galley-Slaves, more than Wretches in Turkish Captivity: Oh! call to them, and see whether ye can yet perswade them into a livelier Faith of this terrible Day. O that you could

could yet save their Souls from Death, and cover a multitude of Sins ! It's like they'll scorn your Tears, and laugh at your Admonitions, for the God of this World hath blinded them : but, Oh ! pray for them, that their Eyes may be open'd, that they may see the Precipice they run upon, and behold the bottomless Gulph, upon the Brink whereof, they stand. They are rolling down the Hill ; Oh ! stop them, if you can, that they fall not into the Lake beneath : seeing your Zeal for their Souls, your concern for their Welfare, your entreaties to save themselves from this Generation, your sorrow for their undone Estate, your grief for their hardness of Heart, they may yet relent, and turn before the Lord comes, and smites the Earth with a Curse.

2. Every day spend some time in reflecting on this Day. In the Life of Pachomius, we read, That every day he used to bespeak the several

Parts

Parts and Members of his Body, and talk to them, as if they had been rational Creatures: Behold, saith he, my beloved Parts, I will advise you to nothing but what is wholesome, and useful for you, and therefore shew your selves obedient to my Counsel, and let's serve God cheerfully till we get to a better place. As to you my beloved Hands, the time will come when you will no more be able to strike your Neighbour, or play at Cards and Dice, and when you will not be able to reach any more after Goods, that do not belong to you. As to you, my beloved Feet, the time will come, when the way you have gone will be stop'd up, and when ye will be no longer able to run into vain and loose Company. Hearken unto me my Senses, and whatever helps to make up this mortal Frame, let's strive lustily before Death over-take us, and stand boldly in the evil day, and fight bravely, till the great God put

an

an end to our Sweat and Labour,  
 and call us to his heavenly King-  
 dom. What will it profit you to  
 taste of all the Sweets of this World,  
 if any thing can be called sweet in  
 so much Misery? Why should ye be  
 loath to labour, when to labour ye  
 were born? Why should ye refuse  
 to suffer when shortly you must die,  
 and mingle with Dust? Why should  
 ye seek after a soft and easie Life,  
 when e'relong you'll meet with it in  
 Heaven: This is no Time, no Place  
 for Pleasure; that's only to be found  
 among the Blessed above. This is  
 it, that I would have you compre-  
 hend above all things, that through  
 sensual Delights and Satisfactions,  
 Men go into unquenchable Fire, but  
 through Bryars and Thorns lies the  
 way to Joys, which shall never have  
 an end. Why do ye murmur against  
 me when I bid you fast, and watch,  
 and pray? Should I indulge you, it  
 would be your Bane, it would be  
 Cruelty in me to spare you; to give  
 you

you Ease would be the way to precipitate my self and you into endless Torment. Thus spake that holy Man to the respective Parts and Members of his Body; and thus, *Christian*, do thou preach to thy Soul every day; ask it, which of those two Sentences, that shall be pronounced in the last day, art thou most desirous of; of that, *Come ye Blessed*, or of the other, *Depart ye Cursed*? If (as no Man is fond of Misery) thou dost hunger and thirst after the former, come my Soul, let's retire, let's ascend the Hill of God, and from thence take a view of what will be hereafter. The Posture of Affairs thou seest now, will not continue long; fancy thou sawest

Vid. Dre-  
med. Tris-  
tum. Chris-  
tian. I. i.  
c. 8. § 5.

a Man whom the Divine Bounty hath crowned with variety of temporal Blessings. This Person having a mind to take his Pleasure, retires with his Family to his Country-House, adorned with *Tyrian Silke*, and

and *Perfian* Carpets, and with all the Eastern Riches, and there lives merrily, and at his ease; one Night being very jovial at Supper, a Servant of his, base and ill-natured, puts some Lethargick, or Opiate Potion into his Master's, and Fellow-Servants Cups; and having rocked them all asleep, opens the Doors, lets in Thieves, and Robbers, who having plunder'd the House, at last lay violent hands on the Master, and to make sport with him, drag him thus intoxicated into the open Field, and there leave him. In the mean while the Heavens grow black, and a hideous Tempest gathers in the Clouds, the Sky begins to lighten, and the Voice of Thunder to be heard, and a dreadful Rain falls; and in the midst of all this Noise and Confusion, the besotted Master wakes, looks about, quakes, trembles, believes himself in another World, is astonish'd to see himself lying on a barren Turf, without Servants, without

Atten-

Attendants, without Friends, without Necessaries, without Conveniences, among Showers, and Storms, and Tempests, stiff with Cold, frozen to Death almost, and beholding nothing but Misery about him.

O my Soul ! thou canst not but look upon such a Person, as the very Emblem of Confusion, and while thou dread'st this fearful State , take heed thou doest not prepare for it, or drop into it ; take heed of carnal Security, for that will expose thee to the Rage and Fury of hellish Thieves, and make God's Indignation strangely surprizing. The Terror that will seize the sleepy Soul, when it is summon'd away to the Bar of a righteous God, will be beyond Storms of Hail, and Tempests of Rain, and Flashes of Lightning, and Claps of Thunder. When Covetousness would entice thee, shew it the miserable Gehazi trembling before the Throne of God : when Luxury would tempt thee, bid it look upon the wretched

*Bel-*

*Belshazzar*, mourning to eternal Ages for his Intemperance: when worldly Mindedness would debauch thee, find out *Nabal* among the damned Spirits, and with that Sight fright the foolish Lust away: when Envy would enter into thy Soul, call out *Cain* from that unhappy Crew, and bid it see its Doom in his Funeral: when present Satisfactions would make thee slight the after hopes of Glory, bid the profane *Esau* stand forth from his fiery Cell to which he is condemned, and it will lose its Courage. Thou readest of the *Syrians*, how in a Consternation sent upon them from above, they fled in the Night, leaving all their Provision behind them. But what is this to the Consternation, the Judgment Seat of Christ will strike into that Man, who having slighted his Commands, is on a sudden ordered to come and answer the Reason of his Contempt; and forced to leave all his vain Excuses;

fes and Apologies behind him. The Name of some Warriours hath frightened Men, Women, & Children ; and then how terrible will the Name of the *Lord of Hosts* be to them, that have fought against his Holy Spirit by their Stubbornness. O my Soul, *Blessed is he that watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame,* Rev. 16. 15.

3. *Walk circumspectly every Day, and use that conscientiousness, you would use, were you sure, you should be summon'd to Judgment at Night.* Say not, next Year, or when I have accomplished such a Business, I will trim my Lamp, and make it ready against the Bridegroom comes. Every Day to live in expectation of the Summons is the act of a Wise and Blessed Servant : And he that every Day walks with God, walks in a mighty sense of his Omnipotence, and Omnipresence, and in his company, business, conversation, dealings, keeps God in his Eye, sets his Laws before him, walks as

one resolved to please God in all things, lets not a Day pass over his Head without doing some good, uses the World, as if he used it not, and if through inadvertency he slips, rises again presently, and arms himself with fresh resolutions, is the Person, that lives every Day, as if it were his last Day.

Sinner, wert thou sure, that this Night thou shouldst be summon'd to the Bar of God, wouldest thou swear and lie, and dissemble, and be Cholerick, or backward to good works? Live, as if thou wert sure of it: For suppose thou continuest in the Land of the Living that Night, thou lost nothing by this preparation, nay, thou art a mighty gainer by it, for hereby thy Soul is refresh'd, thy Mind preserved in an excellent temper, thy Goodness strengthen'd, thy Graces renew'd, thy Affections enlarg'd, thy Understanding enlightned, thy Will made more tractable, thy Spirits eased, thy Calmness maintain'd

tain'd , and thy very Body kept in Health. God loves thee , the Promises of the Gospel belong to thee : Devils cannot hurt thee , thou livest like a Christian , actest like a Man of Reason , preparest for thine own quiet , thy Condition is happy , thy Estate safe , thy Life out of danger , thy Conscience clear , thy Confidence in God increases , thy Satisfaction swells , thy Comforts grow bigger , and thou freest thy self from that Mire and Clay , in which so many Souls do stick , and delivereſt thy Soul from that terrible Pit , which swallows up so many imprudent Travellers .

4. *When ever you see, or hear of the judicial Process of a Malefactor, think, and reflect upon this Day.* Think how terrible the sight of the judge is to the guilty Prisoner , and how much more terrible the sight of a Majestick God , will be to the unhappy Sinner that would not be kept in by the Laws , and Sanctions of the great Comman-

er of the World, and stood more in awe of a Child, or Servant, when he was going to commit lewdness, than of him, who gave him life, and being : Think how the Malefactor is frightened & confounded with the vast company of Men, and Women, that crowd in to hear his Tryal, and how much more the impenitent Sinner will be ashamed in the last Day, when all the People that have been since the Creation of the World, will look upon him, and hear, what his fate will be ; some Orators have been struck dumb with the greatness of their Auditory, what effect then may we suppose will the Congregation of Mankind have upon a wretch, that never saw the hundred thousandth part of them before ?

Think how it must be with the Malefactor , before the Sentence of Death passes upon him, how heavy his mind is, how Melancholick his Thoughts, how drooping his Spirits are, and what Palpitations he feels

feels about his Heart, and how far greater the heaviness of the sinful Soul must be, before the Sentence of Condemnation proceeds against her, from the mouth of God, how much more sad remembrances, how much more dismal reflections will seize upon her !

And if it be so sad with her, before the Sentence be past, what trembling and horrour will invade her after it ? A Malefactor here on Earth may yet entertain hopes of Pardon, his Prince may be merciful, pitty the distressed condition of his Family, remember past services, and relent, and change the Sentence, but the sinful Soul once condemned to suffer, hath no hopes of forgiveness, no hopes of being Repriva'd, no hopes of being released, not but that God is infinitely more merciful, then the meekest Prince on Earth can be, but the time of Mercy is past. Once he was merciful to her to a Miracle, his Mercy was her Shield, Mercy did encompass her, Mercy lay

entreating of her, Mercy courted her, Mercy though abused, came again, and tried new arguments, Mercy followed her, Mercy preserved her from a Thousand evils, Mercy would not suffer the roaring Lion to touch her for many years, Mercy stood by her, even then, when she desperately affronted her Maker, Mercy was patient towards her, Mercy wept over her, Mercy call'd to her, Mercy would have pull'd her away from her Errors, but she thrust this bright Angel away, would have none of it, made light of it, laught at its charms, despised its entreaties, scorned its caresses, disregarded its smiles, refused its offers, rejected its embraces, and therefore cannot feed her self with hopes of Pardon now.

Nay, the Malefactor here on Earth, when Men will not Pardon, hath yet hopes, that upon his true Repentance God will Pardon him, but the Soul, that departs hence in a sensual, carnal condition, the same she

lived

lived in, hath no higher Court to appeal to, none above God to make her moan to, none beyond the suprem Lawgiver to address her self to. The God she hath despised, and whose Mercy could make no impression on her, is to be her last Judge, and therefore how much more disconsolate must her state be, then the condemn'd Malefactor's here on Earth !

*5. Whenever you converse with sick and dying men, and are present, when their Breath leaves their Bodies, think, and reflect upon this day : Think with your selves, This man is going to be judged, his Soul is entring into the Territories of another World, to know, what her everlasting state must be : This will shortly be my case. I must ere long follow her to God's Tribunal ; here my stay will be but short ; here I have no continuing City ; here I am not to tarry long ; my Friend, that's gone, shews me the way, that I must go. I saw him*

expire, I heard his last groans, I was by, when his Eye-strings broke, if the Lord Jesus gave him any assurance of his favour, before he died, with what cheerfulness will his Soul meet her Bridegroom in the Air, how welcome will he be in the Court of the great King! What rejoicing will there be , when he , and the other glorified spirits behold one another, and they see that one more is added to their Number, for there is no envy in Heaven,no grudges, no fretting, because so many are admitted into the Everlasting Mansions, but the more holy Souls do enter there, the more their joy encreases: If this my Friend hath lived above the World, while he lived here, with what gladness, will his Soul be brought, and enter into the Kings Palace ! How will his Name be remembred there! How kindly will Angels talk of him ! How favourable will the Judge be to him ! but if his Devotion and Piety hath been but Paint and Shew, what a surprize

prize will it be, immediatly upon his coming among the spirits of another World to be arrested at the suit of the Great God, and to be carried away to his Tryal ! He is taken away from his sick Bed, but should his Soul be sent away with a Curse, how much worse will Hell be, then his sick Bed ! In a sick Bed Physick may yet give some ease, but Hell scorns all Medicines, no Drugs are of any use there, no Cordials, no Cataplasmes are to be found there , no vulnerary Herbs grow in that Wilderness : On a sick Bed, Friends may yet comfort us, but in Hell, there is no Friend, all are Enemies, all hate one another, because none can deliver the other from his Torments : In a sick Bed Neighbours may give their advice, but in Hell no advice can be given, for the Inhabitant, are not capable of taking it: The Devils indeed may advise them to speak evil of God, because of the irreversible doom they lie under, but that's a Remedy infinitely worse then the Disease,

Disease, and they that follow this counsel increase God's Anger, and their own Plagues, and as they venture upon new Sins, so God must inflict new Curses, and try new Rods, and new Scourges, which makes the misery truly infinite.

Such Reflections the sight of a sick and dying Man will cause; nor is this judging of his everlasting and final State but a mere conditional Meditation, undertaken for no other end, but to affect our own Souls with the day of God's righteous Judgment, to improve our own Thoughts, and to make a holy use of such Occasions, as God's Providence thinks fit to present to us.

*6. Whenever you go to a Funeral, think of this Day of Judgment.* When you see the Mourners go about the Streets, when you your selves accompany the Corps to the Grave, think of the great Sentence the Soul will receive upon her Approaches to the Throne of the Heavenly Majesty.

sty. St. Hierom describing  
the Funeral of the happy  
*Paula*, that famous Saint,  
who while she lived here, was Eyes  
to the Blind, a Nurse of the Poor, a  
Staff to the Lame, and an Example  
to all religious Persons, tells us,  
That when she was dead, there were  
heard no Shrieks, no Howlings, no  
Weeping, no despairing Lamentati-  
ons, but Psalms, and Hymns, and  
spiritual Songs: her Corps was car-  
ried to the Grave upon Bishops Shoul-  
ders, Prelates carried Lamps and  
Wax-Candles before her, and a Quire  
of Singing-Men accompanied her to  
her Tomb, and most of the People  
of *Palestina* came together to attend  
the Funeral. The Monks crept out  
of their Cells, the Virgins from their  
Retirement, and good Men, in all  
Places thereabout, thought it Sacri-  
legie not to pay the last Office to her.  
The Widows and Orphans, as in the  
case of *Dorcas*, came, and shew'd the  
Garments she had made for them;  
and

*In Epitaph  
Paulae Rom.*

and all the indigent and needy cryed, they had lost a Mother: and for three Days, Psalms were sung in *Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and Syriack;* and every Body celebrated her Funeral as if it had been their own.

When you behold the Funeral of such a holy Person, think, how with far greater Pomp the Angels meet her Soul at the Gates of Heaven, and on their Shoulders, carry it to the Throne of everlasting Mercy. Think how joyfully those blessed Ministers conduct such a Soul to her eternal Rest, and how they triumph that she is deliver'd from the Burden of the Flesh, and advanced from a Valley of Tears, to a Place of endless Glory. When the great *Constantius* died in *Brittaine*, his Ashes were put in a golden Chest, and with great Pomp carried through *France*, and *Italy*, to *Rome*; but, think how far greater Honour it is, for such a holy Soul to be convey'd by the Spirits of Light into the City coming down from

from Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband, the twelve Gates whereof are <sup>*Rev. 21.*</sup> <sub>2,21.</sub> twelve Pearls, and the Streets pure Gold, as it were transparent Glaſs.

On the other side; when you see the stately Funeral of a voluptuous and sensual Man, such as *Attila* was, the Souldiers tearing their Hair, the Courtiers weeping, the Body wrap'd up in Silk, the Guard proclaiming his valiant Actions, and Monuments erected upon the Grave, of Gold, of Silver, and of Iron; think on the more dismal Funeral of his Soul, in case it was not wash'd here with the Waters of Repentance, and which is the greatest Purification, with the Blood of Jesus: think, if the Soul be for ever separated from the glorious Presence of God, and command-ed away into everlasting Darkness, not all the stately Monuments raised for the honour of her Body will qualifie her Misery in the other World;

World ; not all the Acclamations or Applauses of Flatterers will give her any Comfort, not all the Riches she enjoy'd on Earth, nor all her Wealth and Greatness, and Dominion, will there extinguish the least Spark of Fire her Conscience will feel. This dreadful Funeral will be attended with crouds of unhappy Spirits, who, instead of mourning, will rejoice at the Guest that's come into their Tents, and *Lycaon* like, cover her with eternal Darkness. Such a Soul is laid in a worse Grave than her Body, even in the burning Lake, where the Misery is proportion'd to her former Sins, and her Conscience frightened with Scenes of Horror ; and the Remembrance of her *quondam* Pomp encreases her Discontent and Anguish : think of this, and learn to be sober ; think of this, and learn self-denial : think of this, and learn not to love the World : think of this, and learn to secure the Light of God's Countenance : think of this, and

and learn to honour them that fear the Lord: think of this, and learn to do good in your Generation.

7. *To avoid the Terror of this future Judgment, judge your selves here on Earth; for if we would judge our selves we should not be judged,* saith the Apostle, *I Cor. 11. 31.* Then we judge our selves, when we confess our particular Errors, and condemn our selves for the Commission; when with Grief, and sorrow of Heart, and Indignation against our selves, we do acknowledge, that we have abused the Divine Mercy, and by so doing deserved his taking his holy Spirit from us; when we lay his Threatnings before us, and confess that these Plagues are due to us, and that we have deserved them, and wonder at the Patience of God that hitherto hath been loath to give order to the destroying Angel to seize on us; when, from a sense of our Neglect and Sins, we cry, *It is a bitter thing and evil, that we have*

have forsaken the Lord, and that his Fear hath not been in us, and are so convinced of our Demerits that we can give no other Reason for our Escape and Preservation so long, but God's infinite Goodness; when we are angry with our selves for our imprudence in neglecting so great Salvation, and study, how to be revenged upon our Corruptions; when we decry our inward, and outward failings, and are resolved to mortifie them, were they as dear to us, as our right Hand, and Foot, and the Apple of our Eye; when we erect a Tribunal in our Souls, and bid our disorderly Thoughts, and Words, and Actions appear before us, and give an account of their behaviour, and finding they have been exorbitant, lash them into better manners; when we lay mulcts on our inordinate desires, in case they will not yield, and put our Flesh to some more than ordinary trouble, in case it will not be kept within its due bounds

bounds, and limits ; when we punish our Eyes, by fixing them so many hours on Heaven, or on the Word of God, because they gazed on things, which God hath forbid ; when we chastise our Ears with hearing so many Sermons, because such a Day, they listned with pleasure to an offensive story ; when we inflict silence upon our Tongues for some days, because such a time they spake things either undecent, or injurious to our Neighbours ; when we bid our Feet keep at home for a considerable time, because they ran into evil Company, when they shoud not ; when we deny our Body its necessary Food and Refreshment for some time, because it pamper'd it self such a Day, and plaid the wanton ; when we will not let our sensual Appetite enjoy its harmless, and innocent delights for a certain time, because the other Day it was greedy after outward and carnal satisfactions ; when we suffer ourselves to be reproached without an-

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fswering, because such a Day we flew out into an unruly passion.

— This is to judge our selves, and they that do so, may be confident, they shall not be condemn'd with the World, in doing so we do that to our selves, which God would have done to us, if we had continued impenitent, & & insensible, and take that vengeance of our selves, which God would have taken of us in a severer manner, in case we had not bethought our selves ; and thus we prevent his anger, and shew, that we dread his Wrath, and seek his Love, that his Threatnings fright us, and that we have just apprehensions of his Indignation ; and such men the Holy Ghost counts happy, for, blessed is he, that feareth always, saith the wise Man, Proo. 28. 14.

8. In your Actions, regard not so much how they are relish'd with Men, as whether they will hold Water, and endure the Test, before the Judge, when your naked Souls must appear before him. Abundance of our

our Actions appear plausible to them, who see no further, then the outside, but let's consider, whether they will bear the piercing Eye of this All-seeing Judge; it's true, should God lay our Righteouiness to the Line, and measure our Religious actions by the exact Rule of his Wisdom, Justice, and Holiness, he would spy innumerable flaws even in the Services of the devoutest Person living, but he proceeds not according to that rigour, but upon the account of the Great Mediator vouchsafes Grains of allowance for accidental infirmities, and incogitancies, and unforeseen, and involuntary slips, and the sincerity of a good work is that, he chiefly takes notice of, whether the intention was good, whether the design was Holy, whether Love was the Principle of it, whether it was without reserves of some secret sin, whether there was candour, and ingenuity in it, and whether the offering was free, unforced, unconstrain'd by any outward Motive, and

whether Charity lay at the bottom.

Many of our Actions may want these qualifications of Sincerity, and yet appear specious, and gay, and glorious in the Eyes of Spectators, and those we converse withal. Look not *Christians* on the commendations of your Neighbours in your acts of Piety, but on the commendations of that Judg, to whom ye must give an account, for *not he that commends himself, or whom men commend, is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth*, 2 Cor. 10. 18. If he do not commend our works, all the approbations of Mortal men, will do us but little good another day; and serve only to tell us, that we were cheated by those *Encomiums*. Alas! How many men are counted Just, and Righteous, Honest, and Good here on Earth, whom the Great Judge will not find so, when he comes to examine their deeds by the Rule of Sincerity! Sirs! matter not, whether men do look upon you as devout, but see, that God may esteem you so;

Alas

Alas! what doth it signify, that men call me Religious, when God knows, I am an Hypocrite? What comfort can it be to me, that men think me charitable, when God sees, I give Alms to be seen of men? What will it profit me, that men call me Zealous, and Fervent, when God sees, that gain, and profit is the cause of it? What doth it avail me, that men say, I pray well, when God sees, I study to please the Company? What great matter is it, that men applaud me for a single Virtue, when God sees I am partial in my Obedience? What great advantage can it be to me, that men say I am humble, when God sees pride in that very humility! The Apostle therefore bids us look to the manner of our performances; *He that gives, let him do it with simplicity; He that rules, with diligence; He that shews Mercy, with cheerfulness; Let love be without dissimulation, be kindly affectioned one to another with Brotherly love,* &c. Rom. 12.8,9,10.

So, when you pray, let your Hearts breath out holy Desires ; when you sing, let your Minds bear a principal Part in the Hymn ; when you come to the Table of the Lord, let your Souls be touch'd with the love of *Jesus* ; when you are kind to your Neighbours, banish all sinister Designs ; when you express any holy Fervours, let God's Glory be in your Eye ; when you discharge any part of your Duty to God and Man, let a cheerful Obedience to the Gospel be the Motive : Do all this as unto God, not as unto Men ; do it, as if no Creature saw you ; do it, as if none but God were before you ; do it, as if you were to be summoned this Moment to Judgment : such Services will endure the *Probe*, such Devotions will stand good, such Acts of Piety will bear searching, such Works God himself will be a witness to, that they were wrought according to his Will, and by the Power of his holy Spirit.

9. What Injuries you receive in this World from Men, bear them patiently, out of regard to this great Day of Judgment, when God will set all things to rights, and take care that you lose nothing by your Sufferings. Rejoyce Christian in thine Innocence, which God intends to proclaim in this Day before all Men and Angels. He'll wipe off all the Dirt and Aspersions that are thrown upon thee, in this day: He will bring forth thy Righteousness as the Light, and Psal. 37. 6. thy Judgment as the Noon-day. What need'st thou take notice of an Affront offer'd to thee, when thy God stands engaged to take notice of it with a Witness in this day? What need'st thou seek Revenge, when thy Master, whom thou servest, is resolved to judge thy Cause in this Day? What need'st thou fret and rage at the Contempt, Men put upon thee here, when thy great Lord will be sufficiently angry with the Offender in this day? What need'st

thou grieve that Men abuse thee here, when thy Sovereign Master will grieve every Vein of the Reviler's Heart in this day ? What need'st thou be concerned for the Reproaches Men cast upon thee for thy Righteousness sake, when he, for whose Name thou sufferest, will vindicate thy Wrong, and call the Persecuter Fool for his Pains in this day ?

Say not, At this rate there will be no living for me in the World ; trust that God, who hath promised to clear thy Innocence in this day, and he will hide thee under the shadow of his Wings, while thou art in this troublesome World : he that preserved *Elijah*, when *Ahab*, and *Jezebel*, and all the Prophets of *Baal* were enraged against him, knows how to keep thee in the Hour of Temptation. Ay, but Revenge is sweet ! What if it be so to Fletch and Blood ? it will prove bitter to thy Spirit : and if ever thou art saved, a bitter Repentance must come in, and salve  
the

the Wounds; and wilt thou prepare  
for a needless and uncertain Repen-  
tance? How knowest thou whether  
God will after the Fact, give thee  
his holy Spirit to come to this Re-  
pentance? And what Cruelty is it,  
when God is resolved to revenge thy  
Quarrel, that thou wilt needs revenge  
it too? If thou revengest it, God  
will take no care to plead for thee;  
but if thou leave thy Cause entirely  
to him, thy Wrong will be infinitely  
recompens'd in this day. Thus did  
thy blessed Master, who *when he suf-  
fer'd, threatened not, but*<sup>1 Pet. 2. 23.</sup>  
*committed himself to him* that judges righteously. Wilt thou  
boast of being his Disciple, and art  
thou loth to follow his Example?  
Fear not, those Men who wrong thee  
now, will be sufficiently sorry for  
the Injury, either here, if ever they  
be truly converted, or hereafter, when  
the Almighty will convince them to  
their everlasting Grief, how much they  
were mistaken in their Verdicts, and  
what

what sinister Constructions they put upon thy Actions, how barbarous their Rage was against thee, how inhumane the ill Language they gave thee, and how unjust all their Reproaches were. Do but stay a little while, and thou shalt see it with thine Eyes : Have but Patience until that appointed day, and thou wilt find, the Prophet was in the right, when he said, *The Righteous shall rejoice when he sees the Vengeance, so that a Man shall say, Verily, there is a reward for the Righteous, Verily, he is a God that judges in the earth,* Psal. 58. 9, 10.

10. Consider particularly, That it will be more tolerable for Matt. 11. 22. Heathens, and professed Infidels at this day, than for Christians ; and not without reason. Treason is more excusable in a Stranger than in a Citizen or Domestick, and more may be pleaded for a sinful Life in a Pagan, than in one of Christ's own Household. A Heathen is

is obliged to God by the Right of Creation and Preservation ; but a Christian hath, besides these, Baptism, and his Vows, to tye him : his Motives to the Fear of God are stronger than they can be in other Religions. Where the greatest Rewards are, there we may justly believe People will be most industrious, most laborious, and most sedulous. No Religion proposes those rewards, that Christianity doth. The Heathens either had doubtful Apprehensions of an everlasting Happiness, or were Strangers to the nature of it. Among us this endless Glory is not only professed, but most clearly revealed ; we are sure of it, confident of it, have no reason to dispute the certainty of it, and the nature of it is discovered to us by him who came out of his Fathers Bosom ; therefore he that under these Manifestations proves careless and negligent of God's Love, can have no Excuse.

And

And as Heaven is or may be seen in all its Glories among us, so we are assured of a burning Lake, of an endless Misery, which attends the unconscionable, and disobedient ; whereof the Notions of Pagans, and Idolaters, were but dark, and consequently we have a stronger Bridle to curb the Violence of our sinful Desires than they ; and therefore this must make our Doom more terrible.

The helps we have to arrive to Vertue are not only more in number, but more powerful, our Knowledge is greater, our Instructions greater, our Illumination greater, our means of Grace richer ; and we have greater Examples of Holiness than ever Heathens had ; we have besides Philosophy, and the Law of Nature, the Sacred Scriptures, and besides Conscience, the Spirit of God to exhort us, to reprove us, to admonish us, to assist us, and to help our Infirmitieis. If a Heathen sin, he doth but

but stumble in the dark ; if a Christian sin, he falls at Noon-day. We have Sacraments to bind us to a perfect harred of Sin ; and *Semiramis* took no more pains to fence her City with Brick Walls, than the Almighty doth our Souls from falling a Prey to the Prince of Darkness; nay, our Impediments in our way to Bliss are less than the Pagans had : by Baptism, and the Power of Christ's Death, the Powers of Darkness are broken, the Devil's Strength is much abated, his Arrows are not half so fiery as once they were. The Heathens have far greater Obstacles. The Devils Power among them seems unlimited, and therefore for us to fall a Prey to this Enemy, for us to yield to his Suggestions, for us to be drawn into his Net, will scarce admit of a charitable Apology.

These things are now made light of ; but nothing is more reasonable, then that they who have abused the greatest Mercy, should feel the severest

rest Lashes; *Christian*, why should God give thee greater Light, and greater advantages, then to other men? They are men of the same passions, thou art of, and they are Flesh, and have Reason, and are God's Creatures; and depend upon his Providence, as well as thou; & why should God make a difference betwixt thee & them? No other Reason can be assigned, but his undeserved compassion. Thou wicked Servant, had thy Master a greater kindness for thee, then for thy fellow Servants, and could not this distinguishing kindness prevail with thee to be faithful, and loyal to him? Thy ingratitude is abominable, and thy torment shall be proportionable: Thy impiety was intolerable, and thy flames shall be so too: Thy baseness is inexpressible, and thy plagues shall be so too: Thy unworthiness is uncommon, and thy agonies shall be so too: Thou deservest a bitterer Cup, and thou shalt drink it too. If God should not punish

nish thee more then Heathens , he would be partial, his Honour would suffer in the indulgence, and he hath but little encouragement from thy good nature to lessen his Wrath and Fury.

*Dionysius* talked Atheistically , as well as thou, but he had no Scripture to direct him; the *Sybarites* were luxurious, as thou art, but they knew not what the Gospel meant. *Novellius*, *Torquatus* was given to drunkennes, as thou art, but he never made Vows against it in a Sacrament of Baptism. *Tarquinius* was proud, as thou art, but he never heard of the humble *Jesus*. *Julia* was vain in her dress , and habit, as thou art, but she understood not, what the stupendious Work of Redemption meant. *Decius Mundus* was lecherous as thou art, but he was not acquainted with a Holy, Sanctifying Spirit. *Themistocles* was envious, as thou art, but he never heard God speaking to him, by his Son. *Epicurus* was careless of a future

future Immortality, bu he had not Ministers to preach to him. *Simanides* was covetous , as thou art, but he knew of no Articles of belief. *Phila-  
grius* was choleric as thou art, but he made no profession of Goodness and Religion. *Sisamenes* was unjust as thou art, but he never heard, that the Unrighteous are not to inherit the Kingdom of God. *Unidius* was uncharitable as thou art, but he had not that Cloud of Witnesses, those holy Examples that thou hast. *Sardanapalus* minded nothing but his Lusts, and Belly, as thou dost, but he never heard of a Crucified Saviour. *Democles* was a flatterer and dissem-  
bler, as thou art , but the Terrors of the Lord were never manifested to him. All which advantages thou pos-  
sessest above these *Pagans*, therefore it must needs be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* at the Day of Judgment, then for thee.

11. Let the process of this Day among other Vertues, engage you par-  
ticularly

particularly to a practical Charity, and  
 readiness to do good to others, who are  
 under affliction, especially where God  
 hath blessed you with conveniences,  
 and superfluities; for the Judge is  
 resolved to insist upon this Virtue  
 more then others: This he has not  
 only assured us of, *Matt. 25. 34,*  
*35, &c.* but it is also the most rea-  
 sonable thing in the World, that we  
 who hope to find Mercy in that Day,  
 should be acquainted with shewing  
 Mercy to Christ's distressed members  
 here; for it is Christ's Rule, that  
 with what Measure we mete. *Luke 6. 38.*  
 here, with the same Mea-  
 sure it shall be meted to us again;  
 and to this purpose the Apostle, *He*  
 that soweth sparingly, shall reap  
 also sparingly; but he that sows boun-  
 tifully, shall reap also bountifully, *2 Cor.*  
*9. 6.* — The Virgins that wanted  
 Oyl, were excluded from the Wed-  
 ding-feast, when the Bridegroom  
 came, that Oyl was Charity, which  
 therefore the good Samaritan poured

into the Wounds of the distressed Man ; and as Oyl supplies the Joints, gives ease to the part, which is in pain, and is an ingredient of most Chirurgical Operations , so Charity relieves the Miserable, and refreshes the Calamitous, and hath an influence upon all other Virtues. It was therefore wisely said by that pious Duke of Savoy, when one ask'd him, where his hunting Dogs were ; he led them into his Hall, where abundance of Lame, and Blind, and Poor People fed at his cost and charges ; these saith he are my Dogs that serve me in my hunting after Heaven and Happiness : All other Vertues lose their glory, where Charity doth not bear them company. To this Virtue we are born, and it is the most easie of all the rest, and therefore to want it when we come before the Judge, must needs turn his Face, and Favour from us. And it is remarkable, that the Judg represents all the acts of Chariety, he reckons up in this Day, what done to himself

himself, I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was a thirsty, and ye gave me drnk, &c. whereby he doth not only intimate the cloſe union, and communion, the poor Man hath with him, insomuch that he is one with him, but shews, that in our Alms, and doing good we must have respect chiefly to *Christ Jesus*. Let the Man, that begs thy Charity, or wants thy Relief, be brought to Poverty by his own folly, let him be wicked, let him be ungrateful, give him with respect to thy Saviour; look upon Christ, when thou dost supply his wants; have the Lord Jesus in thine Eyes, regard not so much the poor Man's Nature, because he is of the same Flesh with thee, nor so much his Relation, because he is of Kin to thee, nor so much his Country, because he is of the same Town, that thou art of, nor so much his Religion, because he professes the same Faith with thee, nor so much his Person, because he is a Gentleman, nor so much his readines to

extol thy bounty, as the Love and Charity of the Holy *Jesus* to thy Soul and Body. Have that in thine Eye chiefly, when thou openest thy Hand, let him be in thy Mind, when thou distributest thy bounty ; this makes thy Charity amiable, and acceptable and fit to be proclaimed, and commended in this Day.

And indeed, How dost thou know Christian, but that thy Saviour may sometimes disguise himself, and appear to thee in the shape of a poor Man, and wilt not thou give freely, wilt not thou give cheerfully, wilt not thou give readily, since thou knowest not, but thou mayest give it to thy Saviour himself? And how glorious an *Encomium* will it be in the last Day, to hear him say before the World, *I was naked, and this good Man cloathed me, I was in Prison, and he visited me!* The three Angels of Old disguised themselves in the shape of Travellers to try *Abrabam's* hospitality, and from hence possibly came

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the heathenish Fables, that their *Jupiter* came in the Habit of a poor Man to *Philemon*, who entertaining him, *Jupiter* made his House a Temple, and the Owner, the Priest of it; and that *Apollo* coming as a Traveller to *Mydas* and being kindly entertain'd by him, rewarded his Bounty with vast Wealth and Riches; though we have no warrant from Scripture to believe that Christ doth actually disguise himself to us in such shapes, and appears to us to try our Charity, yet it is no impossible thing, and we may piously believe it, thereby to encourage our selves to cheerful Contributions, lest finding us hard-hearted, and ill-natured, covetous, and incompassionate he deal with us, as *Jupiter* among the Heathens, is said to have dealt with *Lycaon*, whom when he came to visit, as a guest, and found cruel instead of being hospitable, he turned him into a Wolf. Christ hath threatned the hard-hear-  
ted a worse, and stranger *Metamor-*

*phosis*, for they that will not be like him in doing good, shall be doomed to be like Devils, to mourn and lament as they, and to Eternal Ages too, for this is the Sentence, *Go into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat*, &c. Mat. 25. 41, 42.

12. Let nothing discourage you from admiring those men who have always lived in the Thoughts, and Contemplation of this future Judgment; we admire men for their Parts, Abilities and Accomplishments; we admire Aristotle for his Learning, Archimedes for his Mathematicks, Socrates for his Gravity, Absalom for his Beauty, Achitophel for his Policy, Saul for his Tallness, Arion for his Musick, Asabel for his Nimbleness, the Men of Benjamin for their Skill in Slinging, Darius for his Gratitude, Cicero for speaking, Virgil for Poetry, Urbino for Painting, &c. but these are poor things

things for our Reason to admire; Men that live Day and Night in a sense of this future Judgment, live continually in expectation of the Archangel's Trumpet, or the Summons of Almighty God, these are the Men, whose Praise we ought to shew forth in the Gates. Let others admire *Demosthenes* for his *Rhetorick*, I will admire St. *Paul*, who so look'd at the things not seen even at this Judgment, as to rejoice in Tribulation, and though troubled on every side, yet was not distressed, though perplex'd, yet was not in despair, though persecuted, yet was not forsaken, though cast down, yet was not destroy'd, appeared to the World as sorrowful, yet was always rejoicing, as poor, yet made many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessed all things, 2Cor.4.7,8,18. 2Cor.6.10.

Let others admire *Arcesilaus* for his Prudence, *Scipio* for his Fortitude, *Aristocrides* for his humanity. *Pythagoras* for his Philosophy, I

will admire the Primitive Believers, who stood in such awe of this Great Day, that their constant Thoughts and Contrivances were, how to resist their Adversary the Devil, and upon this account stood fast in Faith, quitted themselves like Men, were strong, and always abounding in the work of the Lord. The thoughts of this Day made them vigilant, sober, heavenly minded, despisers of the World; charitable, kind, tender-hearted, fruitful in all good works, and why should we delude our selves, or fancy we need not do so, or that they did more then they ought to have done. The Best of Men, the Wisest Men, the Holiest Men that ever lived, have been frightened over-awed, supported, preserved in goodness by the contemplations of this Day, and therefore if we are not, it's no sign, that we are wiser then they but that we are more stupid; we are all ambitious of participating of their glory, and why

why should we be afraid of taking the way, that led them to it. These are the men, who choose the better part. These are the men, who though laugh'd at by the World, are a Crown of Glory, and a Royal Diadem in the Hand of their God ; and for their Shame they shall have Double, and for their confusion, they shall rejoice in their portion. Their light shall come, the Glory of the Lord shall rise upon them : They shall break forth on the right Hand, and on the left, and in Righteousness shall they be established : They shall dwell on high, their place of defence shall be the Munition of Rocks ; Bread shall be given them, their Water shall be sure : Their Eyes shall see the King of Glory in his Beauty, they shall behold the Land, that is very far off ; even the Land, where Rivers of Pleasure flow, where no Tears are to be seen, no Sorrow to be found, no anguish to be heard of. These are the Men which at last shall sit down in  
the

the Throne of God, and having suffered Hunger and Thirst with the Holy Jesus here, shalt Eat, and Drink at his Table in his Kingdom. These Men will at last be look'd upon with greater fear and reverence, then now they are, and when the bruitish World shall see them advanced to the highest Seats of Bliss, and behold that these which once were the most contemptible Creatures, shall judge the World with the Son of God, they will change their Voices, and with the *Maltheses* be ready to call them Gods, whom but a little before they condemned, as Varlets and Villains. I conclude this discourse, with St. Peter's exhortation, 2 Pet. 3 9---15. *The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to us ward, not willing, that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance.* But the Day of the Lord will come, as a Thief in the Night; in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise,

noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat ; the Earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up ; seeing then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of Persons ought ye to be in all Holy Conversation, and Godliness, looking for, and hastening unto the coming of the Day of God, wherein the Heavens being on Fire shall be dissolved, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat ; Nevertheless we according to his Promise look for New Heavens, and a New Earth, wherein dwells Righteousness, wherefore Beloved, seeing that ye look for such things be diligent, that you may be found of him in Peace, without Spot, and Blameless.

F I N I S.

## ERRATA.

Page 38. line 13. ~~had~~ Farms, p. 45. l. 1.  
r. To let the World see the Bands.  
p. 55. l. 12. r. persons are, who are employ'd.  
p. 210. p. 10. r. imitation.



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*Becteri Minera Arienaria*, 4<sup>o</sup>.

— *De nova Temporis*, 4<sup>o</sup>.

*Holder's Elements of Speech*, 8<sup>o</sup>.

*Charras Experiments on Vipers* in 8<sup>o</sup>.

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